Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

A BUDDHIST POEM FOR TODAY



How to enjoy a life of great meaning and altruism

SHANTIDEVA

Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

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SHANTIDEVA'S

Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

HOW TO ENJOY A LIFE OF GREAT MEANING AND ALTRUISM

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Introduction

The Buddhist masterpiece called *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* was composed by Bodhisattva Shantideva, a great Buddhist master who lived in the eighth century AD. This holy scripture is a very practical guide that teaches us how to enter, make progress on, and complete the Buddhist path to enlightenment. It is a condensation of all Buddha's teachings and it shows clearly how these teachings can be integrated into our daily life.

Shantideva's *Guide* has been the inspiration of many great spiritual works, such as *Eight Verses of Training the Mind* by the great Kadampa Teacher Langri Tangpa, and *Training the Mind in Seven Points* by Bodhisattva Chekhawa. Both these texts explain how to cherish others, equalize self and others, and exchange self with others, how to practise "taking and giving", and how to transform adverse conditions into methods for attaining liberation. All these teachings are extracted from Shantideva's *Guide*. Many Kadampa practitioners keep Shantideva's teachings in their hearts, and Je Tsongkhapa and his disciples greatly praised Shantideva's work.

Through studying many Buddhist texts we may become a renowned scholar; but, if we do not put Buddha's teachings

– the Dharma – into practice, our understanding of Buddhism will remain hollow, with no power to solve our own or others' problems. Expecting intellectual understanding of Dharma alone to solve our problems is like a sick person hoping to cure his or her illness through merely reading medical instructions without actually taking the medicine. As Shantideva says in the fifth chapter:

(109) We need to put Buddha's teachings, the Dharma, into practice
Because nothing can be accomplished just by reading words.
A sick man will never be cured of his illness
Through merely reading medical instructions!

Each and every living being has the sincere wish to avoid permanently all suffering and problems. We normally try to do this by using external methods, but no matter how successful we are from a worldly point of view – no matter how materially wealthy, powerful, or highly respected we become – we shall never find permanent liberation from suffering and problems. Suffering, pain, unhappiness, and problems do not exist outside the mind. They are unpleasant feelings, and feelings are types of mind. Only by transforming our mind can we eliminate suffering and problems permanently. The method for doing this is explained clearly in Shantideva's *Guide*.

In reality, all the problems we experience day to day come from our self-cherishing and self-grasping – misconceptions that exaggerate our own importance. However, because we do not understand this, we normally blame others for our problems, and this just makes them worse. From these two basic misconceptions arise all our other delusions, such as anger and attachment, causing us to

experience endless problems. We can solve all of these problems by sincerely practising the instructions presented in this book. At least we should memorize from each chapter those verses we find most helpful, and contemplate their meaning again and again until our mind becomes peaceful and positive. We should then try to maintain this peaceful state of mind day and night without interruption. By doing this, we shall experience a happy and meaningful life.

We should read this book with a happy mind, free from distraction and negative views. It is also very important to improve our understanding of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* by studying commentaries such as *Meaningful to Behold*. Through sincerely practising these instructions we can transform our ordinary, self-centred intentions into the supreme good heart, our ordinary, confused view into profound wisdom, and our ordinary way of life into a Bodhisattva's way of life. In this way, we shall attain the supreme inner peace of enlightenment, which is the real meaning of our human life.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso,
USA,
April 2002.

In Sanskrit:
Bodhisattvacharyavatara

In Tibetan:
Jang chub sem pai chö pa la jug pa

In English:
Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

An Explanation of the Benefits of Bodhichitta



Whereas all other virtues are like plantain trees,
In that they are exhausted once they bear fruit,
The enduring celestial tree of bodhichitta
Is not exhausted but increases by bearing fruit.

CHAPTER 1

An Explanation of the Benefits of Bodhichitta

Homage to the enlightened Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

(1) I prostrate to the enlightened Buddhas endowed with the Truth Body,
And to the Bodhisattvas and all other objects of prostration.
I will explain briefly, in accordance with the Scriptures,
How to engage in the condensed practices of the Bodhisattva.

(2) There is nothing written here that has not been explained before,
And I have no special skills in composition.
My reason for writing this is to benefit others
And to keep my mind acquainted.

(3) Thus, the strength of my faith and my virtuous
realizations
Might for a while be increased by this,
And perhaps others who are as fortunate as I
Might also find this meaningful to behold.

(4) This precious human life, so hard to find,
Offers the ultimate goal for living beings.
If we do not strive to accomplish this goal now,
How will such a precious opportunity arise again?

(5) Just as on a dark and cloudy night
A flash of lightning for a moment illuminates all,
So for the worldly, through the power of Buddha's
blessings,
A virtuous intention occasionally and briefly occurs.

(6) Thus, while our virtues are mostly weak,
Our non-virtues are extremely strong and fearsome.
Other than bodhichitta – a compassionate mind
wishing for enlightenment –
What virtue can overcome the heaviest evils?

(7) The Able Ones, the Buddhas, who have considered
this for many aeons,
Have all seen bodhichitta to be the most beneficial
Because, through it, countless masses of living
beings
Can easily attain the supreme bliss of
enlightenment.

(8) Those who wish to destroy their own suffering,
Those who wish to dispel the suffering of others,
And those who wish to experience much happiness
Should never forsake the practice of bodhichitta.

(9) The moment bodhichitta is generated
Even in pitiful beings bound within the prison of samsara,
They become Bodhisattvas – a "Son or Daughter of Buddha" –
And are worthy of veneration by humans and worldly gods.

(10) Just like the supreme elixir that transmutes into gold,
Bodhichitta can transform this impure body we have taken
Into the priceless jewel of a Buddha's form.
Therefore, firmly maintain bodhichitta.

(11) Since the limitless wisdom of Buddha, the Sole Navigator of living beings,
Upon thorough investigation has seen its preciousness,
Those who wish to be free from samsara's suffering
Should firmly maintain this precious mind of bodhichitta.

(12) Whereas all other virtues are like plantain trees,
In that they are exhausted once they bear fruit,
The enduring celestial tree of bodhichitta
Is not exhausted but increases by bearing fruit.

(13) Just as when those who are greatly afraid rely upon a courageous one,
Whoever relies upon bodhichitta will immediately be freed from danger
Even if they have committed unbearable evils;
So why do the conscientious not rely upon it?

(14) Just like the fire at the end of the aeon,
In an instant it completely consumes all great evil.
Its countless benefits were explained by the wise
Protector Maitreya
To Bodhisattva Sudhana.

(15) In brief, you should know
That bodhichitta has two types:
The mind that observes enlightenment and aspires,
And the mind that observes enlightenment and
engages.

(16) Just as the distinction between wishing to go
And actually going is understood,
So, respectively, the wise should understand
The difference between these two bodhichittas.

(17) From the mind that aspires to enlightenment,
Great effects arise while in samsara;
But an uninterrupted flow of good fortune does not
ensue
As it does from the engaging mind.

(18) For whoever takes up the engaging mind of
bodhichitta
With the intention never to turn back
From completely liberating
The infinite living beings throughout all realms,

(19) From that time forth, for him there will arise –
Even if he is asleep or apparently unconcerned –
Vast and powerful merit, equal to space,
That flows without interruption.

(20) For the sake of those with lesser inclinations,
These benefits were explained with logical reasons
By the Tathagata himself
In *Sutra Requested by Subahu.*

(21) If even the thought to relieve
The headaches of others
Is a beneficial intention
That results in infinite merit,

(22) What can be said of the wish
To dispel the immeasurable misery
Of each and every living being
And lead them all to countless good qualities?

(23) Does our father or mother
Have such a beneficial intention as this?
Do the gods or the sages?
Does even Brahma himself?

(24) If, before generating bodhichitta, these living beings
Do not even dream of such a mind
For their own sakes,
How will they develop it for the sake of others?

(25) This mind to benefit living beings,
Which does not arise in others even for their own sakes,
Is an extraordinary jewel of a mind,
Whose birth is an unprecedented wonder.

(26) How can we possibly measure
The benefits of this jewel of a mind –
The source of joy for all living beings
And the cure for all their sufferings?

(27) If the mere intention to benefit others
Is more meritorious than making offerings to the Buddhas,
What can be said of actually striving
For the happiness of every single living being?

(28) Although living beings wish to be free from suffering,
They run straight towards the causes of suffering;
And although they wish for happiness,
Out of ignorance they destroy it like a foe.

(29) For those who are deprived of happiness
And afflicted with many sorrows,
Bodhichitta bestows upon them boundless joy,
Eradicates all their suffering,

(30) And even dispels their confusion.
Where is there virtue equal to this?
Where is there even such a friend?
Where is there merit such as this?

(31) If even someone who repays a kindness
Is worthy of some praise,
What can be said of the Bodhisattva who helps others
Regardless of whether or not they help him?

(32) If someone regularly, or even just once,
Gives food in a disdainful manner,
Which satisfies a few beings for only half a day,
People honour him or her as virtuous;

(33) So what can be said of one who eternally gives
To countless living beings
The everlasting, unsurpassed bliss of the Sugatas,
Fulfilling all their wishes?

(34) Buddha said that whoever generates an evil mind
Towards a Bodhisattva, a supreme benefactor,
Will remain in hell for as many aeons
As the moments for which that evil mind was generated;

(35) But, for whoever generates a pure mind of faith,
The effects of good fortune will increase even more than that.
Even when Bodhisattvas are faced with great adversity,
Negativity does not arise; rather, their virtues naturally increase.

(36) I prostrate to those who have generated
The holy, precious mind of bodhichitta;
And I go for refuge to those sources of happiness
Who bestow bliss even upon those who harm them.

This concludes the first chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life,* entitled "An Explanation of the Benefits of Bodhichitta".

Purifying Negativity



To the Able Ones, the supreme objects of offering,
I offer all the beautiful, scented flowers –
Mandaras, upalas, lotuses, and so forth –
And exquisite garlands, finely arranged.

CHAPTER 2

Purifying Negativity

(1) To maintain this precious mind of bodhichitta,
I make excellent offerings to the oceans of good qualities –
The Buddhas, the stainless jewel of the holy Dharma,
And the assembly of Bodhisattvas.

(2) However many flowers and fruits there are,
And all the different types of medicine;
All the jewels there are in the world,
And all the pure, refreshing waters;

(3) Mountains of jewels, forest groves,
And quiet and joyful places;
Heavenly trees adorned with flowers,
And trees whose branches hang with delicious fruits;

(4) Scents that come from the celestial realms,
Incense, wish-granting trees, and jewelled trees;
Harvests that need no cultivation,
And all ornaments that are suitable to be offered;

CHAPTER 2

Purifying Negativity

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Heavenly trees adorned with flowers,
And trees whose branches hang with delicious
fruits;

(4) Scents that come from the celestial realms,
Incense, wish-granting trees, and jewelled trees;
Harvests that need no cultivation,
And all ornaments that are suitable to be offered;

(5) Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses,
And the beautiful call of wild geese;
Everything that is unowned
Throughout all worlds as extensive as space –

(6) Holding these in my mind, I offer them well
To the supreme beings, the Buddhas and
Bodhisattvas.
O Compassionate Ones, holy objects of offering,
Think of me kindly and accept what I offer.

(7) Lacking merit, I am destitute
And have nothing else that I can offer;
Therefore, O Protectors, who think of the welfare
of others,
Please accept these for my sake.

(8) Eternally I will offer all my bodies
To the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
Out of respect, I will become your servant;
Please accept me, O Supreme Heroes.

(9) Being completely under your care,
I will benefit living beings with no fear of samsara.
I will purify my previous evils
And in future I will commit no more.

(10) Within this sweetly scented bathing chamber
With a clear and glistening crystal floor,
Majestic pillars ablaze with jewels,
And canopies of radiant pearls spread aloft;

(11) With many jewelled vases filled to the brim
With scented waters that steal the mind,
And to the accompaniment of music and song,
I offer ablution to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

(12) I dry their bodies with matchless cloths
That are immaculately clean and scented.
Then I offer to the holy beings
Fragrant garments in magnificent colours.

(13) With various excellent raiments, fine and smooth,
And a multitude of supreme ornaments,
I adorn Arya Samantabhadra,
Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, and all the others.

(14) Just like polishing pure, refined gold,
I anoint the radiant bodies of all the Able Ones
With supreme perfumes whose fragrance pervades
Every part of the three thousand worlds.

(15) To the Able Ones, the supreme objects of offering,
I offer all the beautiful, scented flowers –
Mandaras, upalas, lotuses, and so forth –
And exquisite garlands, finely arranged.

(16) I offer them vast and fragrant clouds
Of supreme incense that steal the mind;
And I offer delicacies of the gods,
Together with a variety of food and drink.

(17) I also offer jewelled lamps
Arranged on golden lotuses;
And on polished ground sprinkled with scent
And scattered with beautiful flower petals,

(18) I offer to those with the nature of compassion
A celestial palace resounding with heavenly praise
And hung with beautiful pearls and jewelled ornaments
Whose infinite radiance illuminates space.

(19) Eternally I will offer to the Able Ones
Exquisite jewelled parasols held aloft,
With pleasing shapes, handles of gold,
And rims embellished with beautiful ornaments.

(20) In addition to these, may masses of offerings
Resounding with music and beautiful melodies
Remain like so many clouds that send down relief
To suffering living beings.

(21) And upon all the holy Dharma Jewels,
The stupas, and the images,
May there fall an uninterrupted rain
Of flowers, jewels, and so forth.

(22) Just as Manjushri, Samantabhadra, and others
Made offerings to the Conquerors,
So do I make offerings to the Sugatas, the
Protectors,
And to the Bodhisattvas.

(23) To these oceans of good qualities,
I offer a melodious ocean of praise.
May a chorus of sweet-sounding melodious verses
Always ascend to their presence.

(24) To all the Buddhas abiding in the three times,
The Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly,
I prostrate with as many emanated bodies
As there are atoms in all the worlds.

(25) I prostrate to the bases for generating bodhichitta,
To the images of Buddha's body, speech, and mind,
To the Abbots and Preceptors,
And to the supreme practitioners on the path.

(26) Until I attain the essence of great enlightenment,
I will go for refuge to the Buddhas;
Likewise, I will go for refuge to Dharma
And to the assembly of Bodhisattvas.

(27) With my palms pressed together, I make requests
To those endowed with great compassion –
The perfect Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas,
Who abide throughout the ten directions.

(28) Since beginningless time in samsara,
Throughout this and all my previous lives,
Out of ignorance I have committed evil,
Ordered it to be committed,

(29) And, overwhelmed by deceptive ignorance,
Rejoiced in its being committed by others.
Seeing all these to be grave mistakes,
From the depths of my heart I confess them to the holy beings.

(30) Whatever harmful actions of body, speech, or mind
I have done under the influence of delusion
Towards the Three Precious Jewels,
My father and mother, my Spiritual Guide, and others –

(31) All the extremely unbearable evil actions
Committed by me, an evil person
Polluted by many faults –
I confess before the Deliverers, the enlightened beings.

(32) But I might die before I purify
All my negativities;
O Please protect me so that I
May surely and swiftly be freed from them.

(40) Even if, as I lie on my deathbed,
I am surrounded by friends and relatives,
I alone shall have to experience
The feeling of my life being severed.

(41) Of what help will my companions be
When I am seized by the messengers of the Lord of Death?
At that time, only merit will protect me,
But upon that I have not relied.

(42) O Protectors, oblivious to dangers such as these,
I, who am devoid of conscientiousness,
Have committed many negative actions
For the sake of this transient life.

(43) Terrified is the person who today is led away
To a place where his limbs will be torn from his body.
With a dry mouth and sunken eyes,
His appearance is completely distorted.

(44) So what need is there to mention the terrible despair
I shall experience when, stricken by great panic,
I am seized by the physical apparitions
Of the terrifying messengers of the Lord of Death?

(45) "Who can grant me real protection
From this great terror?"
Petrified, with wide, bulging eyes,
I shall search for refuge in all directions,

(46) But, seeing no refuge anywhere,
I shall become utterly dejected.
If I cannot find refuge there,
What shall I do at that time?

(47) Therefore, from today I go for refuge
To the Conqueror Buddhas who protect living beings,
Who seek to give refuge to all living beings,
And who, with their great strength, eradicate all fear.

(48) Likewise, I sincerely go for refuge
To the Dharma they have realized,
Which dispels the fears of samsara,
And to the assembly of Bodhisattvas.

(49) Overcome with fear, I offer myself
To Arya Samantabhadra,
And I offer my body into the service
Of Arya Manjushri.

(50) To Protector Avalokiteshvara,
Who acts unerringly out of compassion,
I utter this desperate cry for help:
"O Please protect me, an evildoer!"

(51) Seeking refuge, from my heart
I pray to Arya Akashagarbha,
To Arya Ksitigarbha,
And to all the compassionate Protectors.

(52) I go for refuge to Arya Vajrapani,
Upon sight of whom all harmful beings,
Such as the messengers of the Lord of Death,
Flee in terror to the four directions.

(53) Previously I transgressed your advice,
But now, having seen these great dangers,
I go to you for refuge
To quickly dispel my fears.

(54) If I need to follow the doctor's advice
When frightened by an ordinary illness,
How much more necessary is it to follow Buddha's advice
When perpetually afflicted by the many harmful diseases of the delusions?

(55) If all the people living in this world
Can be greatly harmed by just one of these delusions,
And if no medicine other than Dharma
Can be found anywhere to cure them,

(56) Those who do not act in accordance with the Dharma teachings
Given by Buddha, the all-knowing physician,
Through which all pains of the delusions can be removed,
Are surely foolish and confused.

(57) If it is necessary to exercise caution
When near a small, ordinary precipice,
How much more necessary is it when near the fathomless pits of hell
Into which I could fall for a very long time?

(58) It is unwise to indulge in pleasures,
Thinking, "At least I shall not die today";
For without doubt the time will come
When I shall become nothing.

(59) Who will grant me fearlessness?
How can I be freed from these fears?
If I shall inevitably become nothing,
How can I continue to indulge?

(60) What remains with me now from the pleasant experiences
Of my previous lives that have now ceased?
And yet, because of my strong attachment to worldly pleasures,
I have gone against the advice of my Spiritual Guide.

(61) If, when I depart from this life
And from my friends and relatives,
I must wander all alone,
Why commit non-virtue for the sake of friends and enemies?

(62) "How can I definitely be freed
From non-virtue, the source of all suffering?"
Throughout the day and the night,
I should think only about this.

(63) Whatever I have done
Out of unknowing and confusion –
Be it a natural non-virtue
Or a transgression –

(64) With my palms pressed together
And my mind fearful of suffering,
Prostrating myself again and again,
I confess them all before the Protectors.

(65) I request all the holy beings
To free me from all my evils and faults;
And since these bring only harmful results,
In future I will not commit them again.

This concludes the second chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Purifying Negativity".

Generating Engaging Bodhichitta



Just as it is rare indeed
For a blind person to find a jewel in a heap
of garbage,
So too, by some very rare chance,
I have generated bodhichitta.

CHAPTER 3

Generating Engaging Bodhichitta

(1) With great gladness I rejoice
In the virtues that protect living beings
From the sufferings of the lower realms
And lead all those who suffer to fortunate realms.

(2) I rejoice in the accumulation of virtue
That releases living beings from samsaric rebirth
And leads them to the state of nirvana –
The supreme, permanent inner peace.

(3) I rejoice in the enlightenment of the Conqueror
Buddhas
And in the spiritual paths of the Bodhisattvas.

(4) With delight I rejoice in the ocean of virtue
That arises from generating the mind of
enlightenment, bodhichitta,
Which brings happiness to all living beings,
And in the deeds that benefit those beings.

(5) To the Buddhas residing in all directions,
With my palms pressed together I make this request:
Please continue to shine the lamp of Dharma
For living beings lost and suffering in the darkness of ignorance.

(6) To the Conquerors who wish to enter paranirvana,
With my palms pressed together I make this request:
Please do not leave living beings in a state of blindness,
But remain with us for countless aeons.

(7) Thus, through the merit I have collected
From all these virtuous actions,
May the suffering of every living being
Be brought completely to an end;

(8) And until all those who are sick
Have been cured of their illness,
May I become their medicine,
Their doctor, and their nurse.

(9) May a rain of food and drink descend
To dispel the miseries of hunger and thirst;
And during the great aeon of famine,
May I become their food and drink.

(10) May I become an inexhaustible treasury
For the poor and destitute.
May I be everything they might need,
Placed freely at their disposal.

(11) From this moment on, without any sense of loss,
I shall give away my body and likewise my wealth,
And my virtues amassed throughout the three times
To help all living beings, my mothers.

(12) Through giving all, I shall attain the nirvana of a Buddha
And my bodhichitta wishes will be fulfilled.
I give up everything for the sake of living beings,
Who are the supreme objects of giving.

(13) Since I have given up this body
For the happiness of living beings,
It will always be theirs to beat, to revile,
Or even to kill if they please.

(14) Even if they play with it,
Mock it, or humiliate it,
Since I have given this body to others,
What is the point of holding it dear?

(15) Therefore, in whatever I do,
I will never cause harm to others;
And whenever anyone encounters me,
May it never be meaningless for them.

(16) Whether those who encounter me
Generate faith or anger,
May it always be the cause
Of their fulfilling all their wishes.

(17) May all those who harm me –
Whether verbally or by other means –
And those who otherwise insult me
Thereby create the cause to attain enlightenment.

(18) May I become a protector for the protectorless,
A guide for those who travel on the road,
And, for those who wish to cross the water,
May I become a boat, a ship, or a bridge.

(19) May I become an island for those seeking dry land,
A lamp for those needing light,
A place of rest for those who desire one,
And a servant for those needing service.

(20) To benefit all living beings,
May I become a treasury of wealth,
Powerful mantras, potent medicine,
A wish-fulfilling tree, and a wish-granting cow.

(21) Just like the great elements such as earth,
And like eternal space,
May I become the basis from which everything arises
For sustaining the life of countless living beings;

(22) And, until they have passed beyond sorrow,
May I sustain all forms of life
Throughout the realms of living beings
That reach to the ends of space.

(23) Just as all the previous Sugatas, the Buddhas,
Generated the mind of enlightenment
And accomplished all the stages
Of the Bodhisattva training,

(24) So will I too, for the sake of all beings,
Generate the mind of enlightenment
And accomplish all the stages
Of the Bodhisattva training.

(25) The wise who have sincerely taken up
The mind of enlightenment in this way,
So as to maintain it and increase it
Should encourage themselves as follows.

(26) Now my life has borne great fruit,
My human life has attained great meaning;
Today I am born into the lineage of Buddha
And have become a Bodhisattva.

(27) All my actions from now on
Shall accord with this noble lineage;
And upon this lineage, pure and faultless,
I shall never bring disgrace.

(28) Just as it is rare indeed
For a blind person to find a jewel in a heap
of garbage,
So too, by some very rare chance,
I have generated bodhichitta.

(29) It is the supreme nectar that overcomes
The dominion of death over living beings,
And an inexhaustible treasury
That dispels all their poverty.

(30) It is the supreme medicine that relieves
The sickness of living beings,
And a shady tree that provides shelter
For weary beings travelling samsara's paths.

(31) It is a universal bridge by which all living beings
Can be delivered from the lower realms,
And a rising moon of a mind
That relieves the torment of their delusions.

(32) It is a vast sun that completely dispels
The fog of unknowing from living beings.
It is the quintessential butter that arises
When the milk of Dharma is churned.

(33) For the honoured guests, the beings on samsara's paths
Who wish to enjoy the delights of bliss,
Bodhichitta will satisfy them all
By leading them to the supreme state of bliss.

(34) Today, in the presence of all the Protectors,
I invite all living beings to be my guests
To enjoy these temporary and ultimate delights.
May gods, demi-gods, and everyone else be joyful!

This concludes the third chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Generating Engaging Bodhichitta".

Relying upon Conscientiousness



It is for these reasons that Buddha, the Blessed
One, said
That it is extremely difficult to obtain a precious
human life;
Just as it is rare for a turtle to insert its neck
Into a yoke adrift on a vast ocean.

CHAPTER 4

Relying upon Conscientiousness

(1) A practitioner who has firmly generated
Aspiring and engaging bodhichitta in this way
Should always apply effort without wavering
So as not to stray from the trainings.

(2) If an ordinary action is undertaken in haste
Or without being well thought out,
It might be appropriate to reconsider,
Even if a promise has been made;

(3) But how could I possibly turn back
From something that has been examined
By the wisdom of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas,
And that I too have repeatedly examined?

(4) If, having made the bodhichitta promise,
I do not actually put it into practice,
Since I shall be deceiving all these living beings,
What sort of rebirth shall I then take?

(5) It is said that someone who, out of miserliness,
Does not give even the smallest ordinary thing
That he or she has dedicated to others
Will be reborn as a hungry spirit.

(6) So, if I were to deceive all living beings,
Whom from the depths of my heart I have invited
To be guests at the banquet of enlightenment,
How could I take a fortunate rebirth in the future?

(7) How someone who abandons bodhichitta
Can then attain liberation
Is beyond ordinary comprehension –
Only the omniscient can know that.

(8) For a Bodhisattva, abandoning bodhichitta
Is the heaviest of all downfalls
For, should he or she incur it,
The whole basis of working for others will be lost.

(9) And if someone else were to obstruct or hinder
A Bodhisattva's virtuous actions, even for a moment,
Since he would be undermining the welfare of all living beings,
There would be no end to his lower rebirths.

(10) For if I would experience misfortune
As a result of destroying the happiness of just one being,
What can be said of the consequences of destroying
The happiness of all living beings as extensive as space?

(11) Those who repeatedly renew their Bodhisattva vow
Only to go on to incur further downfalls
Will remain for a long time enmeshed in samsara,
Obstructed from attaining higher spiritual grounds.

(12) Therefore, I must practise sincerely,
In accordance with the promise I have made.
If, from now on, I make no effort,
I shall be reborn in lower and lower states.

(13) Even though there have been countless Buddhas
in the past
Working to benefit all living beings,
Because I have so many karmic obstacles
I have not been a direct object of their care;

(14) And, if I remain like this,
Again and again I shall have to experience
Sickness, incarceration, laceration,
And mutilation in the lower realms.

(15) Since the appearance of a Tathagata – a Buddha,
Faith in his teachings, a precious human body,
And a suitable basis for practising Dharma are so
rare,
When will an opportunity like this arise again?

(16) Today, for example, I might be free from sickness,
Well-nourished, and without afflictions;
But this life is fleeting and deceptive,
And my body is as if borrowed for a moment.

(17) If I engage in non-virtuous actions,
I shall not obtain a human body again;
And if I do not attain a human form,
There will be no virtue, only negativity.

(18) If I do not practise virtue now
While I have the good fortune to do so,
What virtue shall I be able to practise
When I am suffering and confused in the lower
realms?

(19) For if I do not practise virtue
But accumulate only evil,
I shall not even hear the words "fortunate rebirth"
For a hundred million aeons.

(20) It is for these reasons that Buddha, the Blessed One,
said
That it is extremely difficult to obtain a precious
human life;
Just as it is rare for a turtle to insert its neck
Into a yoke adrift on a vast ocean.

(21) Since just one moment of evil
Can lead to an aeon in the deepest hell,
If I do not purify all the evil I have collected since
beginningless time,
It goes without saying that I shall not take a human
rebirth.

(22) Simply experiencing the effects of my non-virtue
Will not lead to my being released from the lower
realms,
For, while I am experiencing those effects,
I shall be generating yet more non-virtue.

(23) If, having found the freedom and endowment of
a human life,
I do not strive to practise Dharma,
There can be no greater self-deception,
There can be no greater folly.

(24) Having understood this,
If out of ignorance I remain indolent,
Then, when the time comes for me to die,
I shall be choked with unimaginable terror.

(25) If my body will burn for a very long time
In the unbearable fires of hell,
Then, without doubt, my mind will be consumed
By the raging fires of regret.

(26) Having found, by some very slight chance,
This beneficial state, so rare to find,
If, while I am endowed with such good fortune,
I am once again led to the hells,

(27) It is as if I am confused by a spell
And my mind has been reduced to nothing!
Even I do not know what causes this confusion –
What is it that dwells within me?

(28) The inner enemies of hatred, attachment, and so forth
Do not have arms and legs,
Nor do they have courage or skill;
So how have they made me their slave?

(29) While they remain within my mind,
They harm me at their pleasure,
And yet, without anger, I patiently endure them.
How shameful! This is no occasion for patience.

(30) If all living beings, including the gods and demi-gods,
Were to rise up against me as one enemy,
They could not lead me to the fires of the deepest hell
And throw me in;

(31) But this powerful enemy of the delusions
In an instant can cast me into that fiery place
Where even the ashes of Mount Meru
Would be consumed without a trace.

(32) No other type of enemy
Can remain for as long a time
As can the enduring foes of my delusions,
For they have no beginning and no apparent end.

(33) If I agree with external enemies and honour them,
They will eventually bring me benefit and happiness;
But if I entrust myself to delusions,
In the future they will bring me only more pain
and suffering.

(34) So how can I remain in samsara joyfully and
without fear
While I readily reserve a place in my heart
For this interminable enemy of long duration
That alone is the cause of increasing all my
suffering?

(35) How can I ever be happy
While these guardians of the prison of samsara
That torture and torment me in the hells and
elsewhere
Dwell like a net of iron in my mind?

(36) Out of anger, worldly people who are filled with
pride will not sleep
Until they have destroyed those who cause them
even the slightest temporary harm.
In the same way, I will not abandon my efforts
Until this inner foe of mine is directly and
definitely destroyed.

(37) If those who engage in violent battles,
Strongly wishing to destroy deluded beings who must suffer death anyway,
Disregard the pain of being wounded by weapons
And do not withdraw until they have accomplished their aim,

(38) Then it goes without saying that, even if I have to endure great hardships,
From now on I should not be indolent or faint-hearted
In striving once and for all to destroy this natural foe
That is the constant source of all my suffering.

(39) If scars inflicted by enemies for no great reason
Are displayed on the body like ornaments,
Why should I not be prepared to endure hardships
In striving sincerely to accomplish the great purpose?

(40) If fishermen, hunters, and farmers,
Who think only of their own livelihood,
Endure such sufferings as heat and cold,
Why can I not forbear hardships for the sake of the happiness of all?

(41) If I myself am not free from delusions
When I promise all living beings
Abiding in the ten directions throughout space
That I will liberate them from *their* delusions,

(42) Is it not foolish of me to say such things
While disregarding my own shortcomings?
This being so, I must never turn back
From destroying my own delusions.

(43) This will be my main objective:
Bearing a strong grudge, to do battle with my delusions.
Although such a grudge appears to be a delusion,
Because it destroys delusions it is not.

(44) It would be better for me to be burned to death
Or to have my head cut off
Than to ever allow myself
To come under the influence of delusions.

(45) An ordinary enemy who is expelled from a country
Will go to another and remain there,
Only to return when he has regained his strength;
But the enemy of the delusions is not like that.

(46) O delusions, delusions, where will you go
When banished by the eye of wisdom and expelled from my mind?
And from where will you return to harm me again?
But, being weak-minded, I am reduced to making no effort!

(47) The delusions are not in the objects, in the sense powers, between them, or elsewhere;
So from where can they cause harm to all living beings?
Because they are just like illusions, I should banish fear from my heart and strive to attain wisdom.
Why bring the sufferings of hell and so forth upon myself for no reason?

(48) Therefore, having considered this well,
I will strive sincerely to practise these precepts as they have been explained.
If a sick person does not listen to the doctor's advice,
How can he expect to be cured?

This concludes the fourth chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Relying upon Conscientiousness".

Guarding Alertness



With all my effort, I should regularly check
That the unsubdued elephant of my mind
Has not broken free but remains bound
To the great pillar of thinking about Dharma.

CHAPTER 5

Guarding Alertness

(1) Those who wish to make progress in the trainings
Should be very attentive in guarding their minds,
For, if they do not practise guarding the mind,
They will not be able to complete the trainings.

(2) A crazy, untamed elephant in this world
Cannot inflict such harm
As the sufferings of the deepest hell
Caused by the rampaging elephant of the mind;

(3) But if the elephant of our mind
Is bound tightly on all sides by the rope of
mindfulness,
All fears will cease to exist
And all virtues will fall into our hands.

(4) Tigers, lions, elephants, bears,
Snakes, all kinds of enemy,
Guardians of the beings in hell,
Evil spirits, and cannibals –

(5) These will all be bound
Simply by binding the mind,
And will all be subdued
Simply by subduing the mind.

(6) Buddha, the Able One, says,
"Thus, all fears
And all infinite sufferings
Arise from the mind."

(7) Who purposely creates the weapons
That harm the beings in the hells?
Who creates the blazing iron ground?
From where do the tempting hallucinations arise?

(8) The Able One says that all such things
Come only from evil minds.
Thus, there is nothing to fear within the three worlds
That has not come from the mind.

(9) If completing the perfection of giving
Were eliminating the poverty of living beings,
Since hungry beings still exist,
How could the previous Buddhas have completed that perfection?

(10) The completion of the perfection of giving is said to be
The thought wishing to give everything to all living beings,
Together with the merit that results from that giving;
Therefore, it depends only on mind.

(11) The killing of fish and other creatures
Has not been eradicated anywhere,
For completing the perfection of moral discipline is said to be
Attaining a mind that has abandoned non-virtue.

(12) It is not possible to subdue unruly beings
Who are as extensive as space;
But simply destroying the mind of anger
Is the same as overcoming all these foes.

(13) Where is there enough leather
To cover the surface of the Earth?
But just having leather on the soles of one's feet
Is the same as covering the whole Earth.

(14) In the same way, it is not possible
To control all external events;
But, if I simply control my mind,
What need is there to control other things?

(15) Rebirth as a first form realm god and so on,
Which results from the mental action of clear concentration,
Does not come from actions of body or speech
But from actions of mind.

(16) Buddha, the All Knowing One, has said
That reciting mantras and prayers, and enduring spiritual hardships,
Even for a long time,
Are to no avail if the mind is distracted elsewhere.

(17) Even those who wish to find happiness and avoid suffering
Will wander without meaning or purpose
If they do not practise training the mind,
The supreme and principal Dharma.

(18) Therefore, I will guard my mind well
And protect it from what is inappropriate.
Without the discipline of guarding the mind,
What is the use of many other disciplines?

(19) Just as I would be careful of a wound
When in a jostling and unruly crowd,
So should I always guard the wound of my mind
When among those who might provoke delusions.

(20) If I am careful of a physical wound
Out of fear of even the slightest pain,
Why do I not protect the wound of my mind
Out of fear of being crushed by the mountains of hell?

(21) If I always practise in this way,
Then, whether I am among harmful beings
Or with people I find attractive,
Neither my steadfastness nor my vows will decline.

(22) I can accept losing my wealth and reputation,
Or even my livelihood or my body,
And I can even accept my other virtues degenerating;
But I can never allow my practice of guarding the mind to decline.

(23) With my palms pressed together,
I beseech those who wish to guard their minds:
Always put effort into guarding
Both mindfulness and alertness.

(24) Just as people who are troubled by sickness
Have no strength for any kind of physical work,
So those whose minds are disturbed by confusion
Have no strength for any kind of virtuous action.

(25) Moreover, for those whose minds lack alertness,
The wisdoms from listening, contemplating, and
meditating
Will not be retained by their memory
Any more than water will remain in a leaky pot.

(26) Even those who have much learning and faith
And who have sincerely applied great effort
Will become defiled by moral downfalls
Through the fault of lacking alertness.

(27) If I lack alertness, the thieves of the delusions
Will cause my mindfulness to degenerate,
And then steal even the merit I have so diligently
gathered
So that I shall fall into the lower realms.

(28) These legions of thieves of the delusions
Are just waiting for an opportunity
And, when one arises, they will steal my wealth of
virtue
And destroy any chance of a fortunate rebirth.

(29) Therefore, I will not allow my mindfulness
To stray from the doorway of my mind;
And, if I notice it is about to leave,
I will restore it by recalling the sufferings of the lower realms.

(30) Fortunate ones who follow the instructions they receive,
Maintain respect for their Spiritual Guide,
And generate fear of the lower realms
Can easily develop and maintain mindfulness.

(31) "I am always in the presence
Of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas
Who, with their omniscient gaze,
See everything without obstruction."

(32) By thinking in this way, we can maintain
Sense of shame, respect, and fear,
And repeatedly bring to mind
The good qualities of the Buddhas.

(33) When mindfulness is maintained
With the purpose of guarding the mind,
Alertness will naturally arise
And even that which was lost will return.

(34) First, I should check to see how my mind is;
And, if I see it is polluted with negativity,
I should remain unmoving,
With a mind as impassive as wood.

(35) I should never look around
Out of distraction or for no purpose,
But always, with a resolute mind,
Be mindful of my gaze.

(36) From time to time, to relax my gaze,
I should look around without distraction;
And if someone appears in my field of vision,
I should acknowledge them and greet them.

(37) To avoid dangers or accidents on the path,
I should occasionally look in all directions,
And prevent my mind from becoming distracted
By relying upon conscientiousness.

(38) I should practise in the same way
Whenever I go or return.
Understanding the need to behave like this,
I should apply this practice in all situations.

(39) I should prepare for any activity by thinking,
"My body and mind must remain correctly
composed";
And from time to time check carefully to see
What I am actually doing and thinking.

(40) With all my effort, I should regularly check
That the unsubdued elephant of my mind
Has not broken free but remains bound
To the great pillar of thinking about Dharma.

(41) Striving for concentration by whatever means,
I should not let my mind wander for even a
moment
But closely examine it by asking,
"How is my mind behaving?"

(42) It is said there are times, when practising giving,
that one can be judicious
In applying some of the finer points of moral
discipline.
When there is danger or a special celebration,
One can perform actions suitable for that occasion.

(43) I should undertake what I intend and have decided
to do,
Without being distracted by other things;
And, with my thoughts focused on that practice,
For now, I should do just that.

(44) In this way, I shall do everything well;
Otherwise, I shall accomplish neither one thing nor
the other.
With this skilful practice, there can be no increase
In secondary delusions, such as non-alertness.

(45) Whenever I listen to any sort of talk,
Whether pleasant or unpleasant,
Or observe attractive or unattractive people,
I should prevent attachment or hatred towards
them.

(46) If for no reason I begin to perform actions
That cause damage to the environment,
I should recall Buddha's advice
And, out of respect, stop straightaway.

(47) Whenever I wish to move my body
Or to utter any words,
I should first examine my mind
And then steadfastly act in an appropriate way.

(48) Whenever there arises in my mind
The desire to become attached or angry,
I should not do or say anything
But remain as impassive as wood.

(49) Whenever I am pretentious, mocking,
Arrogant, or self-important;
Whenever I develop the intention to speak of others' faults,
Or think of profiteering or deceiving;

(50) Or whenever I start to solicit praise,
Deprecate others,
Or use harmful or divisive speech,
I should remain as impassive as wood.

(51) Whenever I desire wealth, honour, or fame,
Or the attentions of a circle of admirers;
Or whenever my mind wishes for veneration,
I should remain as impassive as wood.

(52) If I develop a mind wishing to say something,
While neglecting others' welfare
And pursuing only my own,
I should remain as impassive as wood.

(53) If I am ever impatient with suffering, or lazy and fearful of virtue;
If I am about to speak recklessly or disparagingly;
Or if attachment to my circle of acquaintances arises,
I should remain as impassive as wood.

(54) Thus, having checked thoroughly for delusions
And minds that are drawn to meaningless things,
Courageous practitioners should hold their mind steady
Through applying the appropriate opponents.

(55) With complete certainty, strong faith,
Steadfastness, respect, politeness,
Sense of shame, fearfulness, and inner peace,
I should strive to bring joy to others.

(56) I should not become disheartened by the behaviour of others –
The childish, who are in disharmony with one another –
But understand how this behaviour arises through the force of delusions
And be compassionate towards them.

(57) I should engage only in virtuous actions
To benefit living beings, with no thought for myself;
And I should do so with the understanding that I am like an illusion
That does not exist from its own side.

(58) Contemplating again and again
That I have attained this special freedom after a very long time,
I should hold as unmoveable as Mount Meru
The intention to accomplish the real meaning of a human life.

(59) If, mind, you are concerned
About death taking this body from you
And its being burned or buried beneath the ground,
Why do you cherish it so now?

(60) Why, mind, do you hold this body as "mine"
And grasp it with such affection?
It is only borrowed from others
And will soon be taken from you.

(61) Why, confused mind,
Do you not hold onto a clean wooden form?
What is the use of grasping at this putrid machine
That is only a collection of impurities?

(62) Begin by mentally separating
The layers of skin from the flesh.
Then, with the blade of wisdom,
Cut the flesh away from the bones.

(63) Break open even the bones
And look right down to the marrow.
Make your own investigation –
"Where is its essence?"

(64) If you do not find any essence there
Even when you search with such effort,
Why, mind, do you still grasp this body
With so much attachment?

(65) It is so impure, it is not even fit to eat,
Its blood is not fit to drink,
And its intestines are not fit to suck;
So what use is this body to you?

(66) It is suitable to protect it and care for it
Only for attaining spiritual goals –
This body of a human being
Should be used just for practising Dharma.

(67) But if you guard it for other purposes,
What will you be able to do
When the merciless Lord of Death seizes it
And reduces it to a pile of ashes?

(68) A servant is not rewarded with clothes and the like
If he does no work;
So why do you insist on nourishing this collection
of flesh and bone
When, even when fed, its loyalties lie elsewhere?

(69) In exchange for paying my body its wages,
I will employ it to create virtue for myself and others;
But I should not grasp it as "mine"
Because such grasping is a form of ignorance.

(70) I will regard my body as a boat –
A basis for coming and going –
And to accomplish the welfare of all living beings
I will transform my body into an enlightened
wish-fulfilling jewel.

(71) While I have control,
I should always display a smiling face
And, forsaking frowns and angry looks,
Be friendly and honest towards others.

(72) I should not behave in ways that disturb others,
Such as moving furniture noisily
Or opening and closing doors loudly,
But always delight in humility.

(73) Just as a stork, a cat, or a thief
Accomplish their aims with skill and patience,
So should I accomplish my spiritual goal
Of attaining the state of enlightenment.

(74) When others offer wise advice or admonishment
That, though unsolicited, is nevertheless beneficial,
I should accept it graciously and with respect,
And always be willing to learn from it.

(75) To anyone who speaks the truth,
I should say, "You have spoken well";
And whenever I see others perform meritorious actions,
I should offer praise and develop genuine joy.

(76) I should discreetly describe others' good qualities
And pass on any I hear about,
But, should my own good qualities be mentioned,
I should simply acknowledge any I might have, without pride.

(77) I should perform all actions for others' happiness.
This good quality is precious and rare,
And through it I shall enjoy the pure happiness and joy
That arises from actions that benefit others.

(78) If I do this, I shall suffer no loss in this life
And in future lives I shall experience great happiness;
But, if I do the opposite,
I shall experience misery and pain in life after life.

(79) I should speak truthfully, coherently, and to the point,
Making my meaning clear in a pleasant manner.
I should speak gently and in moderation,
Without a selfish motivation.

(80) Whenever I see other beings,
I should think, "I can attain enlightenment
In dependence upon these living beings!"
And cherish them sincerely.

(81) With either a cultivated motivation
Or one that arises spontaneously,
I should always sow seeds of great virtue
In the fields of holy beings and living beings.

(82) I should perform all my Dharma activities
With skill, clear understanding, and strong faith,
So that others will increase their wisdom
And experience immeasurable benefit.

(83) Although in general the perfections of giving and so forth
Are progressively higher than those that precede them,
I should not forsake great virtues for the sake of small ones.
Principally, I should consider the benefit to others.

(84) Buddha, the compassionate Far-Seeing One,
Allows Bodhisattvas to perform certain actions that are otherwise proscribed.
Understanding this well, I should always put effort
Into my practice of the Bodhisattva's way of life.

(85) I should share my food with animals,
People who are hungry, and practitioners,
And eat merely what I need.
Ordained people can give everything except their three robes.

(86) Because I use this body to practise bodhichitta,
I should not harm it for the sake of temporary benefits,
But care for it so that I may fulfil my bodhichitta wish,
So that eventually all living beings' wishes will be fulfilled.

(87) Those who lack pure compassion and wisdom
Should not actually give away their body
But, instead, devote it to accomplishing
The great purpose of this and future lives.

(88) I should listen to Dharma
With respect and a good heart,
Recognizing it as the supreme medicine
For curing the pains of anger and attachment.

(89) I should teach the vast and profound Dharma with a pure intention,
Free from any wish to acquire wealth or reputation;
And I should always maintain a pure motivation of bodhichitta
And make great effort to put Dharma into practice.

(90) I should explain Dharma to release those who are listening
From samsara, the cycle of suffering,
And to lead them to the ultimate goal –
The attainment of full enlightenment.

(91) I should keep places clean and not throw litter
But dispose of it correctly.
Moreover, I should not defile
Water or land used by others.

(92) I should not eat with my mouth full,
Noisily, or with my mouth open.
I should not sit with my legs outstretched,
Nor rub my hands together meaninglessly.

(93) I should not sit alone with another's partner
In a vehicle, on a bed, or in the same room.
I should observe and enquire about what offends
people
And then avoid such actions.

(94) To show someone the way,
I should not point with just one finger
But respectfully use my right hand
With all the fingers extended.

(95) I should not wave my arms around in an
uncontrolled manner,
But communicate with slight movements
And appropriate gestures;
Otherwise, I shall lose my composure.

(96) To sleep, I should lie in the appropriate position –
Just as Protector Buddha lay when he entered
paranirvana –
And before falling asleep, with alertness,
Make a definite decision to rise quickly.

(97) Within the limitless practices
Taught as the Bodhisattva's way of life,
I should start by emphasizing
These practices that train the mind.

(98) I should practise the *Sutra of the Three Heaps*
Three times each day and three times each night,
And, with reliance on the Three Jewels and bodhichitta,
Purify non-virtues and downfalls.

(99) Whatever I do in any situation,
Whether for myself or for the benefit of others,
I should strive to practise
Whatever training has been taught for that occasion.

(100) For a Bodhisattva, there is no teaching of Buddha
That he or she should not practise.
If I become skilled in this way of life,
Nothing I do will lack merit.

(101) Whether directly or indirectly,
I should never do anything that is not for the sake of living beings.
I should dedicate everything
Solely to the enlightenment of all living beings.

(102) Never, even at the cost of my life,
Should I abandon my Spiritual Guide,
Who is skilled in the meaning of the Mahayana
And a supreme practitioner of the Bodhisattva trainings.

(103) I should train in relying upon the Spiritual Guide
In the manner explained in the *Biography of Shri Sambhava*.
I can understand this and other advice given by Buddha
From studying the Mahayana Sutras.

(104) I should read these Sutras
Because they reveal the Bodhisattva trainings.
First, it is important to study
Akashagarbha Sutra.

(105) Also, it is important to read again and again
The *Compendium of Trainings*
Because it extensively reveals
What is to be practised all the time.

(106) Moreover, sometimes one should read
The *Condensed Compendium of Sutras;*
And with great effort, one should also study
The same two titles by Superior Nagarjuna.

(107) In summary, since I generated engaging bodhichitta and took the Bodhisattva vow,
I should practise all the precepts mentioned above,
So that others' pure view, mind of faith, and good intention
Will be increased by my example.

(108) The defining characteristic of guarding alertness
Is to examine again and again
The state of our body, speech, and mind,
And to understand whether our actions are correct or not.

(109) We need to put Buddha's teachings, the Dharma, into practice
Because nothing can be accomplished just by reading words.
A sick man will never be cured of his illness
Through merely reading medical instructions!

This concludes the fifth chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life,* entitled "Guarding Alertness".

Relying upon Patience



If, for example, a house caught fire
And there was a danger of the fire spreading to an
adjacent house,
It would be advisable to remove anything, such as
dry grass,
That might enable the fire to spread.

CHAPTER 6

Relying upon Patience

(1) All the virtuous deeds and merit,
Such as giving and making offerings,
That we have accumulated over thousands of aeons
Can be destroyed by just one moment of anger.

(2) There is no evil greater than anger,
And no virtue greater than patience.
Therefore, I should strive in various ways
To become familiar with the practice of patience.

(3) If I harbour painful thoughts of anger,
I shall not experience mental peace,
I shall find no joy or happiness,
And I shall be unsettled and unable to sleep.

(4) Overcome by a fit of anger,
I might even kill a benefactor
Upon whose kindness I depend
For my wealth or reputation.

(5) Anger causes friends and relatives to grow weary of me
And, even if I try to attract them with generosity, they will not trust me.
In short, there is no one
Who can live happily with anger.

(6) Although the enemy of anger
Creates sufferings such as these,
Whoever works hard to overcome it
Will find only happiness in this and future lives.

(7) Through having to do what I do not want to do
Or being prevented from doing what I want to do,
I develop mental unhappiness, which becomes the fuel
That causes anger to grow and destroy me.

(8) Therefore, I should never allow this fuel of mental unhappiness
That causes anger to grow within my mind,
For this enemy of anger has no function
Other than to harm me.

(9) I will not allow anything that happens to me
To disturb my mental peace.
If I become unhappy, I shall be unable to fulfil my spiritual wishes
And my practice of virtue will decline.

(10) If something can be remedied
Why be unhappy about it?
And if there is no remedy for it,
There is still no point in being unhappy.

(11) People do not want suffering, criticism,
Harsh words, or anything unpleasant
For themselves or for their friends;
But for their enemies it is the opposite!

(12) In samsara, the causes of happiness rarely occur,
Whereas the causes of suffering are innumerable.
Without suffering, there would be no renunciation;
Therefore, mind, you should remain firm.

(13) If some ascetics and the people of Karnapa
Can endure the pain of burns and cuts for no great purpose,
Why can I not endure hardships
For the sake of liberating everyone from their suffering?

(14) There is nothing that is not easy to accomplish
If we develop familiarity with it;
So first I should learn to forbear small sufferings
And then gradually endure greater ones.

(15) This can be seen in those who voluntarily endure minor sufferings,
Such as animal or insect bites,
Feelings of hunger or thirst,
Or irritations of the skin.

(16) I should not become impatient
With heat and cold, wind and rain,
Or sickness, confinement, or beatings;
For, if I do, the pain will only increase.

(17) Some, when they see their own blood,
Become even stronger and braver;
While for others, just seeing someone else's blood
Causes them to become weak and even to faint!

(18) Both these reactions depend on the mind –
Whether it is strong or it is weak –
So I should disregard any harm that befalls me
And not allow myself to be affected by suffering.

(19) Whenever I experience hardship,
I should fight my delusions, such as anger;
And whenever I experience physical pain,
I should use wisdom to maintain a pure and
peaceful mind.

(20) Those who disregard all suffering
To destroy the foes of anger and so forth
Are the true conquerors worthy of the name "hero";
Other so-called heroes merely slay corpses.

(21) Moreover, suffering has many good qualities.
Through experiencing it, we can dispel pride,
Develop compassion for those trapped in samsara,
Abandon non-virtue, and delight in virtue.

(22) I do not become angry when the cause of suffering
Is something inanimate, such as sickness;
So why become angry with animate causes,
For they too are all controlled by other conditions?

(23) Although it is not wished for in the least,
Sickness nevertheless occurs.
In the same way, even though they are not wanted,
Delusions such as anger forcibly arise.

(24) People do not think, "I will get angry",
They just get angry;
And anger does not think, "I will arise",
It just arises.

(25) All the shortcomings there are,
And all the various non-virtues,
Arise through the force of other conditions –
They do not govern themselves.

(26) The assembled conditions have no thought
To produce a suffering result;
Nor does the resultant suffering think,
"I was produced from conditions."

(27) Neither that which is asserted as the "independent creator of all"
Nor that which is asserted as the "independent permanent self"
Can come into being through intentionally thinking,
"Now I will arise."

(28) If the independent creator itself is not produced,
Then how can it produce anything?
If the self were permanent, then it would follow
That experiences cannot be changed from unpleasant to pleasant.

(29) Clearly, if the self were permanent,
Then, just like space, it could not perform any actions;
And, even if it could meet with other conditions,
It would still be unable to do anything.

(30) Since, even when acted upon, it would remain
as it was,
What effect could an action have on it?
If you say that something else affects the self,
What relationship could the self have with that?

(31) Thus, all effects arise from other conditions,
Which in turn depend upon previous conditions.
Therefore, all things are like illusions – they are not
independent.
If we realize this, we shall not become angry with
anything.

(32) *"If all things were like illusions, who would restrain
what?*
Surely, any restraint would be inappropriate."
On the contrary, it is precisely because things lack
inherent existence
That it is possible to assert the continuum of
suffering can be cut.

(33) Thus, whenever an enemy, or even a friend,
Commits an inappropriate action,
Such behaviour arises from other conditions.
Realizing this, I should remain with a happy mind.

(34) If things occurred independently, out of choice,
Then, since no one wishes to suffer,
How would suffering ever arise
For any living being?

(35) Some misguided people inflict harm upon
themselves
By lying on thorns and the like;
While others, obsessed with finding a partner,
Deprive themselves of food.

(36) Then there are those who inflict harm on
themselves
Through non-meritorious actions,
Such as hanging themselves, leaping from cliffs,
Swallowing poison, or eating bad food.

(37) Although they cherish themselves more than
anything else,
If, under the influence of delusions, people are
capable even of killing themselves,
Why should I be surprised when they inflict harm
On other living beings such as me?

(38) When those who, under the influence of delusions,
Set out to harm or even to kill me,
If I cannot develop compassion for them,
At the very least I should refrain from getting
angry.

(39) If it were the very nature of a childish person
To inflict harm on others,
It would be no more reasonable to get angry with
him
Than it would be to resent fire for burning us.

(40) On the other hand, if that harmfulness were a
temporary fault
And that person were otherwise good-natured,
It would be just as unreasonable to get angry with
him
As it would be to resent space for filling with
smoke.

(41) If someone were to harm us with a stick or other
weapon,
We would normally become angry with the person;
But, since his intent is governed by anger,
It is really towards that anger that we should direct
our wrath.

(42) In such situations, we should think,
"In the past, I harmed others in a similar manner.
Therefore, it is fitting that I, who caused harm to
others,
Should now be experiencing such harm myself."

(43) The physical suffering I experience
Is caused by both the stick and my body;
But, since the stick comes from my assailant and
the body from me,
With which of these should I get angry?

(44) Blinded by craving and ignorance,
I have taken this form, the basis of human
suffering,
Which can hardly bear to be touched;
So with whom should I get angry when it is hurt?

(45) Although we childish beings have no wish for
suffering,
We are greatly attached to its causes.
Thus, the harm we receive is entirely our fault;
What reason is there to blame it on others?

(46) Just as with the guardians of hell,
The forest of razor-sharp leaves, and so forth,
My sufferings in this life result from my actions –
So with whom should I be angry?

(47) Although those who harm me
Are provoked into doing so by my own karma,
It is *they* who will take rebirth in hell as a result;
So, is it not I who harm them?

(48) By depending upon them as my objects of patience,
I can purify many non-virtues;
But by depending upon me as their object of anger,
They will fall for a long time into hellish states of suffering.

(49) Thus, since it is I who inflict harm on them
And they who benefit me,
Why, unruly mind, do you distort things so
By becoming angry with them?

(50) If I maintain this positive view,
I shall not create the cause to be reborn in hell;
But, although I protect myself through the practice of patience,
The same effect will not ripen on others.

(51) *"Then would it not be better to return their harm?"*
No! Retaliation would not protect them;
It would just cause my Bodhisattva vow to degenerate
And destroy my practice of patience.

(52) Since my mind is not a bodily form,
There is no one who can destroy it;
But, because I am strongly attached to my body,
I feel hurt when it is suffering.

(53) Contempt, harsh words,
And unpleasant speech
Do not harm the body;
So why, mind, do you become so angry?

(54) *"Such slanderous words may cause others to dislike you."*
Their dislike will not cause me any harm
In this or future lives;
So why should I not want it?

(55) *"If people dislike you, that might prevent you*
From acquiring wealth or status."
But I shall lose all my worldly acquisitions when I die –
The only thing to remain will be the non-virtue I create.

(56) It would be better for me to die today
Than to live a long life filled with non-virtue;
And, even if I have a long life,
I shall still have to face the suffering of death.

(57) If one person were to awake from a dream
In which he had experienced a hundred years of happiness,
And another were to awake from a dream
In which he had experienced but a brief moment of happiness,

(58) Once awake, the situation would be the same for both
Because neither could ever return to that happiness.
In the same way, whether our life is long or short,
At the time of death everything ends just the same.

(59) Even if I live happily for a long time
And acquire great wealth and possessions,
I shall still have to leave this life empty-handed and naked,
As if I had been robbed by a thief.

(60) *"Even so, acquiring wealth will support your life*
So that you can purify non-virtue and accumulate merit."
But if in acquiring that wealth I generate non-virtues such as anger,
It will be my non-virtue that increases and my merit that declines.

(61) What is the point of a life
In which we commit only non-virtue?
Non-virtues are the main cause of our suffering,
And suffering is the main object to be abandoned!

(62) *"At least you should retaliate when people speak ill of you*
And cause others to lose their faith in you."
In that case, why do I not get angry
When people speak ill of others?

(63) If, mind, you can forbear such loss of faith
When it is related to others,
Why are you not patient when others speak ill of you,
For that is related to the arising of delusions?

(64) Even if someone were to insult or destroy the Dharma,
The holy images, or the stupas,
It would still not be appropriate to get angry with them,
For how could the Three Jewels ever be harmed?

(65) We should also prevent anger arising towards anyone
Who might harm our Spiritual Guide, our friends, or our relatives
By seeing that such harm also occurs in dependence upon conditions
In the way that was just explained.

(66) Embodied beings are harmed
By both animate and inanimate objects;
So why become angry only with animate ones?
We should be patient with both types of harm.

(67) If one person causes harm out of ignorance
And another gets angry with him, also out of ignorance,
Which person is at fault
And which one is not?

(68) Out of ignorance, previously I committed actions
That now result in others causing me harm.
Thus, all the harm I receive is related to my own actions,
So why get angry with others?

(69) Seeing this to be the case,
I should practise what is meritorious,
Impelled by the wish that all living beings
Will develop love for one another.

(70) If, for example, a house caught fire
And there was a danger of the fire spreading to an adjacent house,
It would be advisable to remove anything, such as dry grass,
That might enable the fire to spread.

(71) In the same way, when those to whom I cling are harmed,
My attachment to them enables the fire of anger to spread to me.
Fearing that this will consume all my merit,
I should definitely abandon such attachment.

(72) How fortunate is a person condemned to death
Who is spared with having just his hand cut off;
And how fortunate are we if, instead of the agonies of hell,
We have to experience only the sufferings of the human realm.

(73) If we cannot bear the relatively slight suffering
That we have to experience now,
Why do we not refrain from anger,
Which causes the far greater sufferings of hell?

(74) In the past, because of my attachment to non-virtuous actions,
I have endured aeons of torment in the hells and elsewhere,
And yet none of that has brought any benefit
Either to myself or to others;

(75) But now, through enduring comparatively little discomfort,
I can accomplish the greatest purpose of all –
To free all living beings from their suffering –
So I should feel only joy at having to endure such hardships.

(76) If someone else develops a mind of joy
Through praising another's good qualities,
Why, mind, do you not praise him too
And experience the same kind of joy?

(77) I should always rejoice in others' happiness and virtue.
This joy causes my virtues to increase.
Moreover, it is the cause of delighting the holy beings
And the supreme method for benefiting others.

(78) Those who are not concerned with others' happiness
And do not want them to be happy,
Are like someone who stops paying wages to those who work for him,
Who then experiences many problems.

(79) When my own good qualities are praised,
I want others to rejoice in me;
So why, when others' good qualities are praised,
Should I not want to rejoice in them?

(80) Having generated the bodhichitta motivation
Wishing for all living beings to be happy,
Why on Earth do we not rejoice
When others find some happiness for themselves?

(81) If I really wish for living beings to become Buddhas,
Who are worshipped throughout all worlds,
Why do I dislike it so
When others receive a little mundane respect now?

(82) If someone I was looking after
And providing for in different ways
Were to find his own source of livelihood,
Surely I would be happy, not upset.

(83) If I begrudge living beings even this,
How can I wish for them to attain enlightenment?
Where is the bodhichitta in one who is not happy
When others receive something good?

(84) People become angry when someone benefits their enemy,
But, whether their enemy receives benefit or not,
It is the enemy's own anger that urges him to attack;
So it is that anger which is to blame, not the benefactor.

(85) Why, by getting angry, do we throw away our merit,
The faith others have in us, and our other good qualities?
Would it not be better to get angry with anger itself,
For it brings no benefit to us or to others?

(86) It is bad enough that you, mind, have no remorse
For the non-virtues you have committed;
But why do you compound it
By being jealous with those who practise virtue?

(87) The thought that wishes for our enemy to suffer
Harms only us, through creating non-virtue;
Understanding this, we should not develop harmful thoughts
Towards anyone, including our enemies.

(88) And even if your enemy did suffer as you wish,
How would that benefit you?
If you say, *"Well, at least it would give me some satisfaction"*,
How can there be a mind lower than that?

(89) Such thoughts are like unbearably sharp hooks
Cast by the fishermen of the delusions, such as anger.
Once caught on them, we shall definitely be boiled alive
In the terrifying cauldrons of the guardians of hell.

(90) Praise, fame, and good reputation
Will not increase my merit or extend my life,
Nor will they give me strength, freedom from illness,
Or any form of physical pleasure.

(91) Transient pleasures, such as drinking and playing meaningless games,
Are deceptive.
If I understand the real meaning of a human life,
Such things will have no value for me.

(92) For the sake of fame and reputation,
People give away their wealth and even sacrifice their lives;
But what good can a few dry words do when we die?
To whom can they bring any pleasure?

(93) When people lose their reputation,
They become despondent, like a child
Who cries when the sandcastle he has built
Is washed away by the tide.

(94) A few short-lived, inanimate sounds
Can have no intention to praise me.
"But they are a source of pleasure for the one who praises you;
So you should be happy too."

(95) Whether someone praises me or others,
How shall I benefit from their pleasure?
Since it is entirely in their mind,
I shall not receive any part of it.

(96) *"But you should be happy because he is happy."*
Then I should feel the same way about everyone –
In which case I should also be happy
When something pleases my enemy!

(97) Seeking happiness from praise
Given by friends and others
Is entirely inappropriate –
It is completely childish behaviour.

(98) Praise and so forth distract me from virtue,
Weaken my disillusionment with samsara,
Cause me to envy others' good qualities,
And undermine everything that is beneficial.

(99) Therefore, those who conspire
To prevent me from being praised
Are really acting to prevent me
From falling into the lower realms!

(100) I, who seek liberation, have no need for wealth or a good reputation
For they only keep me bound in samsara;
So why should I get angry
With those who free me from this bondage?

(101) Those who cause me suffering
Are like Buddhas bestowing their blessings.
Since they lead me to liberating paths,
Why should I get angry with them?

(102) *"Don't they obstruct your virtuous practice?"*
No! There is no virtuous practice greater than patience;
Therefore, I will never get angry
With those who cause me suffering.

(103) If, because of my own shortcomings,
I do not practise patience with my enemy,
It is not he, but I, who prevent me from practising patience,
The cause of accumulating merit.

(104) My enemy is the cause of my accumulating the merit of patience
Because without him there is no patience to practise,
Whereas with him there is.
So how does he obstruct my virtuous practice?

(105) A beggar is not an obstacle
To people practising giving
Any more than an Abbot is an obstacle
To those wishing to ordain.

(106) Indeed, there are many beggars in this world,
But people who harm me are extremely rare.
In fact, if I had not inflicted harm on others in the past,
There would be no one to inflict harm on me now!

(107) Just as if some treasure were suddenly to appear in my house
Without my making any effort to obtain it,
I should be delighted to have found an enemy
Who can help me practise the conduct that leads to enlightenment.

(108) Along with myself, my enemy is the cause of my practising patience.
Therefore, I should first dedicate
Whatever fruits arise from this practice
To the person who was a cause of it.

(109) *"But your enemy has no intention to help you practise patience,*
So why should you venerate him?"
Then why venerate the holy Dharma
As a way of practising virtue?

(110) *"Surely you should not venerate an enemy*
Who harbours the intention to cause you harm."
But if everyone was like a doctor striving to help me,
When would I ever practise patience?

(111) Thus, because the practice of patience occurs
In dependence upon those with hateful minds,
Such people should be venerated just like the holy Dharma
Because they are causes of the practice of patience.

(112) Buddha says that the field of living beings
Is like the field of enlightened beings,
For there are many practitioners who, through pleasing living beings,
Have attained the state of perfection, Buddhahood.

(113) Since living beings and enlightened beings are alike
In that the qualities of a Buddha arise in
dependence upon them,
Why do we not show the same respect to living
beings
As we do to the enlightened beings?

(114) They are not equal with regard to their realizations;
But, because living beings have the good quality
Of helping to produce the same result,
Buddhahood,
They are equal in the sense of also being a field
of merit.

(115) Whatever merit there is in venerating one with
limitless love
Is due to the greatness of all living beings,
And whatever merit there is in having faith in the
Buddhas
Is due to the greatness of the Buddhas.

(116) Thus, they are said to be equal because being
respectful to both
Leads to the attainment of the state of Buddhahood;
But because living beings do not possess limitless
good qualities,
They are not actually equal to Buddhas.

(117) The unique qualities of a Buddha are so extensive
That any being in whom even a small fraction of
them appears
Is worthy of veneration that would not be
adequately expressed
Even by offering them everything in the three
worlds.

(118) Therefore, because they share in giving rise
To the supreme state of Buddhahood,
At least from this point of view
It is suitable to venerate living beings.

(119) Moreover, besides pleasing living beings,
What other way is there for us to repay
Those supreme, unchanging friends
Who bestow immeasurable benefit?

(120) By benefiting these living beings, I can repay Buddha,
Who many times gave up his life and entered the deepest hell for their sake.
Therefore, even if they inflict great harm on me,
I will always treat them respectfully and with a good heart.

(121) If Buddhas, who are far superior to me,
Disregard their own bodies for the sake of living beings,
Why do I act out of foolish pride
And not behave as if I were a servant of others?

(122) Buddhas are delighted when living beings are happy
And displeased when they are harmed;
So it follows that, when I please or harm living beings,
It is the same as pleasing or harming all the Buddhas.

(123) If we harm a child,
There is no way to please its mother.
In the same way, if we harm any living being,
There is no way to please the compassionate Buddhas.

(124) Therefore, since I have caused harm to living
beings,
Which has displeased the compassionate Buddhas,
Today I confess individually all these non-virtues –
Please, O Compassionate Ones, forgive me for
offending you so.

(125) From now on, to delight the Tathagatas,
I will definitely become like a servant to all living
beings.
Even if people kick me and humiliate me,
I will please the Buddhas by not retaliating.

(126) There is no doubt that the compassionate Buddhas
Have completed exchanging self with all living
beings.
Thus, the nature of living beings is the very nature
of the Buddhas,
So we should afford them the same respect.

(127) Practising in this way pleases all the Buddhas,
Is a perfect method for accumulating good fortune,
And gives me the ability to dispel the sufferings of
the world.
Therefore, I should always practise the three types
of patience.

(128) If, for example, a king's minister
Were to cause harm to many people,
Far-sighted people would not retaliate
Even if they were able to do so

(129) Because they would see that he was not alone
But was supported by the might of the king.
In the same way, we should not retaliate
To those who cause us a little harm,

(130) Because they are supported by the compassionate
Buddhas –
And by the guardians of hell!
Therefore, we should be like the subjects of
a powerful king
And try to please other living beings.

(131) Even if such a king were to get angry,
He would not be able to subject me to the
sufferings of hell,
Which is what I shall experience
If I harm other beings.

(132) And, no matter how benevolent that king might be,
He could not bestow upon me the attainment of
Buddhahood,
Which is what I shall experience
If I please other beings.

(133) Why can I not see that my eventual attainment of
Buddhahood,
And my success, good reputation,
And prosperity in this life,
All come from pleasing other living beings?

(134) Even while I remain in samsara,
Through patience I shall attain beautiful forms,
Good health, reputation, very long lives,
And even the extensive happiness of a chakravatin
king!

This concludes the sixth chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Relying upon Patience".

Relying upon Effort



When I find myself assailed by a host of delusions,
I will oppose them in a thousand ways.
Like a lion among a group of foxes,
I will not allow myself to be harmed by delusions.

CHAPTER 7

Relying upon Effort

(1) With the practice of patience I should train in effort
Because the fruit of enlightenment depends upon it.
Just as a candle flame cannot move without wind,
So the collections of wisdom and merit cannot grow
without effort.

(2) Effort is a mind that delights in virtue.
Its opponents are the laziness of indolence,
The laziness of being attracted to non-virtuous actions,
And the laziness of discouragement.

(3) The laziness of indolence develops
When, through being attracted to worldly pleasures,
And particularly to the pleasures of sleep,
We fail to become disillusioned with the sufferings
of samsara.

(4) Why do we not realize that while we are caught
In the snare of delusions such as laziness,
We are trapped in the net of samsara
And held within the jaws of the Lord of Death?

(5) If I check carefully, I can see that the Lord of Death
Is systematically slaughtering everyone;
Yet still I am not concerned about my death,
Just like an animal unconcerned about being butchered.

(6) The Lord of Death is looking for his next victim
So that he can prevent him from travelling the path to liberation,
And that victim might well be me;
So how can I just indulge in worldly pleasures?

(7) The time of death will come quickly,
So accumulate wisdom and merit while you can.
Do not wait until the time of death to abandon laziness,
For then it will be too late!

(8) With some things not yet started
And others half-finished,
The Lord of Death will suddenly strike
And I shall think, "Oh no, this is the end for me!"

(9) When I become a victim of the Lord of Death,
My relatives – their eyes red and swollen with sorrow
And their faces flushed with tears –
Will finally give up hope.

(10) Tormented by memories of my previous non-virtues
And hearing the sounds of impending hell,
Out of terror I shall cover myself in excrement!
What shall I be able to do in such a pathetic state?

(11) If even in this human life I shall experience terror
Like that felt by a fish being cooked alive,
What can be said of the unbearable sufferings of hell
That I shall experience as a consequence of my non-virtuous actions?

(12) As a result of the non-virtues I have committed,
I shall be reborn in the hot hells
Where my tender, young flesh will be scalded by hot, molten metals;
So how can I remain at ease under the control of laziness?

(13) I wish for higher attainments without having to make any effort,
Permanent freedom without having patiently to endure any pain,
And to remain like a long-life god while living in the jaws of death.
How foolish I am! When death comes, I shall be overwhelmed by suffering!

(14) By depending upon this boat-like human form,
We can cross the great ocean of suffering.
Since such a vessel will be hard to find again,
This is no time to sleep, you fool!

(15) Why do I forsake the joy of holy Dharma,
Which is a boundless source of happiness,
Just to seek pleasure in distractions and meaningless pursuits
That are only causes of suffering?

(16) Without being discouraged, I should collect wisdom
and merit
And strive for self-control through mindfulness and
alertness.
Then I should equalize self and others
And practise exchanging myself with others.

(17) I should not discourage myself by thinking,
"How shall I ever become enlightened?"
For the Tathagatas, who speak only the truth,
Have said that it can be so.

(18) It is said that even flies, bees, gnats,
And all other insects and animals
Can attain the rare and unsurpassed state of
enlightenment
Through developing the power of effort;

(19) So why should I, who am born a human,
And who understands the meaning of spiritual
paths,
Not attain enlightenment
By following the Bodhisattva's way of life?

(20) Some people might be discouraged out of fear
Of having to sacrifice their flesh,
But this is due to not understanding
What we should give, or when.

(21) In our previous lives, over countless aeons,
We have been cut, stabbed, burned,
And flayed alive innumerable times;
But we have not achieved anything from these
hardships.

(22) Yet the hardships we must forbear to attain
enlightenment
Are insignificant compared to these.
It is like enduring the lesser suffering of surgery
So as to stop much greater pain.

(23) If doctors have to use unpleasant medical
treatments
To cure people of their illnesses,
I should be able to forbear a few discomforts
To destroy the many sufferings of samsara.

(24) But Buddha, the Supreme Physician, does not use
Ordinary treatments such as these;
Rather, he uses extremely gentle methods
To eliminate all the great diseases of the delusions.

(25) To begin with, Buddha, the Guide, encourages us
To practise giving such things as food.
Later, when we become used to this,
We can gradually learn to give our own flesh.

(26) When eventually we develop a mind
That regards our body as being just like food,
What discomfort shall we feel
From giving away our flesh?

(27) The Bodhisattva has abandoned non-virtue and so
does not experience physical suffering;
And, because he clearly realizes emptiness, he does
not experience mental pain.
By contrast, we are afflicted by wrong conceptions
And our bodies and minds are harmed by
non-virtuous actions.

(28) Because of his merit, the Bodhisattva experiences physical happiness,
And because of his wisdom, mental joy;
So even if this compassionate one must abide in samsara for the sake of others,
How could he ever be perturbed?

(29) Through the power of his bodhichitta,
He purified all his previous non-virtue;
And because he accumulates vast collections of merit and wisdom,
He is said to surpass the Hearers.

(30) Having mounted the steed of bodhichitta
That dispels mental discouragement and physical weariness,
The Bodhisattva travels the path from joy to joy.
Knowing this, who could ever be discouraged?

(31) The four powers that assist us in working for the benefit of others
Are the powers of aspiration, self-confidence, joy, and rejection.
The power of aspiration is generated by contemplating the benefits of virtuous actions
And developing fear of the cycle of suffering.

(32) Having overcome all three types of laziness,
I should continuously strive to increase my effort
Through aspiration, self-confidence, joy, and rejection,
And through the force of familiarity and mental suppleness.

(33) In the past, I have accumulated
Countless non-virtuous actions,
Even just one of which can cause me
To experience many aeons of suffering,

(34) But, because of my laziness,
I have not purified any of these evils
And so I remain as an abode of infinite suffering.
Why does my heart not crack open with fear?

(35) I need to attain the good qualities of a Bodhisattva
For the sake of myself and others,
But it might take me many aeons
To accomplish just one of these.

(36) Up to now, I have not familiarized myself
With even a fraction of these good qualities.
How tragic it would be if I were now to waste
This rare and precious rebirth on meaningless pursuits!

(37) Do I have faith and respect in Buddha?
Have I practised his teachings, the Dharma?
Do I rely upon the supreme spiritual friends, the Sangha?
Have I fulfilled the wishes of the poor and needy?

(38) Do I give help to those in danger
Or relief to those who are suffering?
No! All I have done is experience the discomforts
Of being in my mother's womb, and all the subsequent sufferings.

(39) In my previous lives I held views
That denied Buddha's teachings
And, as a result, I am now very poor in spiritual realizations.
Knowing this, how can I give up the practice of Dharma?

(40) Buddha, the Able One, has said
That the root of Dharma is the intention to practise it.
We can generate this intention by meditating
On the law of karma, or actions and their effects.

(41) All physical suffering and mental unhappiness,
All the different types of fear,
And the suffering of being separated from what we want
Arise from non-virtuous actions.

(42) Through committing non-virtuous actions,
Even though we may wish for happiness
We shall be pierced by the weapons of suffering
Wherever we find ourself;

(43) But, through performing virtuous actions with a pure intention,
We shall be sustained by a happiness
That results from that merit,
Wherever we are reborn.

(44) Those born in Buddha's Pure Land arise from the lotus of pure actions performed through receiving the light of Conqueror Buddha's blessings.
They are completely pure, uncontaminated by delusions, like a lotus unstained by mud.

Nourished by hearing Conqueror Buddha's speech directly, they experience supreme inner peace.
All this happiness and goodness is the result of virtuous actions, such as the six perfections, prayer, and dedication.

(45) By contrast, those born in hell, on the fiery ground of red-hot iron, suffer at the hands of the henchmen of the Lord of Death,
Who tear open their skin and pour molten copper into their bodies
And then, piercing them with flaming swords and spears, cut their flesh into hundreds of fragments.
Such sufferings, which are experienced for many aeons, are the result of non-virtuous actions.

(46) Therefore, I should always keep the intention to accumulate virtues, not non-virtues,
And put this intention into practice with strong effort.
As mentioned in *Vajradotsa Sutra*,
Whatever Dharma practice I study, I should complete it with strong confidence.

(47) First, I should examine what is to be done,
To see whether I can do it or not.
If I am unable to do it, I should not start it;
But, once I start something, I should never turn back.

(48) Otherwise this habit will carry into my future lives
And my non-virtue and suffering will continue to increase.
Moreover, other virtuous actions will take a long time to accomplish
And will yield only meagre results.

(49) I should maintain self-confidence in three things:
My Dharma practice, my Dharma activities, and overcoming my own delusions.
I should encourage myself by thinking, "I alone will lead all living beings to the happiness of enlightenment",
And in this way sustain my self-confidence in these three things.

(50) Unlike me, worldly beings are powerless.
Being under the control of delusion and karma,
They are unable to make their lives meaningful.
Therefore, I will practise virtue for their sake.

(51) How can I sit and do nothing
While others waste their lives on meaningless tasks?
Although it might seem like self-importance,
I should act out of self-confidence, which is quite different from self-importance.

(52) If a snake lies dying on the ground,
Crows will act like brave eagles and attack it.
In the same way, if my self-confidence is weak,
Even the slightest adversity will be able to harm me.

(53) If, out of laziness, I give up trying,
How shall I ever attain liberation in such a feeble state?
But if, out of self-confidence, I generate effort,
It will be difficult for even the greatest adversity to harm me.

(54) Therefore, with a steadfast mind
I will overcome all downfalls
For, if I am defeated by a downfall,
My wish to triumph over all obstacles will be but a joke.

(55) "I will conquer all obstacles,
And none shall conquer me."
Thus I, who will become a Conqueror,
Will practise with self-confidence.

(56) Anyone who is governed by the view of self-importance
Is under the influence of delusion, not self-confidence.
Such a person has succumbed to the enemy of the self-important view,
Whereas one with self-confidence has not.

(57) Those who are inflated by the deluded view of self-importance
Will be reborn in the lower realms;
And, if they later take rebirth in a human form,
They will be poor and miserable, like slaves eating others' food.

(58) Stupid, ugly, and feeble, they will be despised by everyone.
So-called "tough people" who are puffed up with pride
Are also counted among the self-important –
Who could be more pathetic than they are?

(59) By contrast, whoever develops the self-confidence
to conquer the enemy of the self-important view
Is a self-confident one who is a true conquering
hero;
And whoever completely eradicates the enemy of
the self-important view
Will be able to fulfil the temporary wishes of living
beings and bestow upon them the fruit of
enlightenment.

(60) When I find myself assailed by a host of delusions,
I will oppose them in a thousand ways.
Like a lion among a group of foxes,
I will not allow myself to be harmed by delusions.

(61) Just as people protect their eyes
When in dangerous situations,
So, whenever there is a danger of the delusions,
I will protect myself from their influence.

(62) It would be far better for me to be burned to death
Or to have my head cut off
Than it would be for me ever to submit
To the enemy of the delusions.

(63) Like a Bodhisattva, I should long to work for others
With the same enthusiasm as that possessed by
someone
Who thoroughly enjoys playing a game.
I should never tire, but experience uninterrupted
joy.

(64) Although it is uncertain whether the result will be
happiness or suffering,
Worldly people still work hard to make themselves
happy;
So why do we not derive joy from the practice of
Dharma,
Which definitely results in happiness?

(65) I have a strong wish to pursue objects of desire,
Which, like honey on a razor's edge, give no real
satisfaction;
But it would be far better to develop a strong wish
to pursue virtuous actions,
Which result in the everlasting happiness of
liberation from all suffering.

(66) Therefore, to complete the virtuous actions
mentioned above,
I will engage in them with the same enthusiasm
As that with which an elephant, tormented by the
heat of the day,
Plunges into a cool, refreshing pool.

(67) If I become weak or tired, I should stop what I am
doing
And continue with it once I have rested.
When I have done something well, I should not be
attached,
But move on to what needs to be done next.

(68) Just as a seasoned warrior on the battlefront
Approaches the enemy's weapons with care,
So will I protect myself from the weapons of the
delusions
And bind these enemies so that I can destroy them.

(69) If someone drops his weapon during a battle,
Out of fear he will immediately pick it up again.
Likewise, if I ever lose the weapon of mindfulness,
I will recall the sufferings of hell and out of fear restore it straightaway.

(70) Just as a little poison will spread throughout the body
With the circulation of the blood,
So, given an opportunity,
The delusions will spread throughout my mind.

(71) A Dharma practitioner should practise as attentively
As a person would walk if he were forced to carry a jar brimming with oil,
Fearful in the knowledge that, if he spilled just one drop,
The tormentor behind him would slay him with a sword.

(72) Therefore, just as I would quickly jump up
If a snake were to crawl into my lap,
So, whenever sleep or laziness threaten,
I will swiftly remove them from my mind.

(73) Each time faults such as delusions arise,
I will thoroughly chastise myself
And then focus for a long time
On the determination not to let that happen again.

(74) In this way, in all situations
I will acquaint myself with mindfulness –
Sincerely and purely practising Dharma
So that I can protect myself and others from suffering.

(75) To ensure that I have the strength for all of this,
Before I commence I will recall
The instructions on conscientiousness
And rise to these tasks with suppleness of body
and mind.

(76) Just as a piece of cotton moving back and forth
Is controlled by the movement of the wind,
So with my body, speech, and mind controlled by
the joy of effort
I will swiftly accomplish all realizations.

This concludes the seventh chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Relying upon Effort".

Relying upon Mental Stabilization



Cooled by flower-scented moonlight
And fanned by peaceful, silent breezes,
They abide joyfully without distraction,
With their minds focused on benefiting others.

CHAPTER 8

Relying upon Mental Stabilization

(1) Having generated effort in this way,
I should place my mind in concentration;
For a person whose mind is distracted
Is trapped within the fangs of the delusions.

(2) Distractions do not arise for those
Who abide in physical and mental solitude.
Therefore, I should forsake the worldly life
And abandon all disturbing thoughts.

(3) Attachment to people, possessions, and reputation
Prevent me from forsaking the worldly life.
To abandon these obstacles,
I should contemplate as follows.

(4) Realizing that delusions are thoroughly destroyed
By superior seeing conjoined with tranquil abiding,
I should first strive to attain tranquil abiding
By gladly forsaking attachment to worldly life.

(5) I, who am decaying moment by moment, have attachment to others
Who are also decaying moment by moment.
As a result of this, I shall not be able to see
Pure, attractive objects for thousands of lifetimes.

(6) If I do not see someone whom I find attractive,
I become unhappy and cannot place my mind in concentration;
Yet, when I do see that person, I find no satisfaction
But am just as tormented by attachment as I was before.

(7) Having strong attachment to other living beings
Obstructs the correct view of emptiness,
Prevents renunciation for samsara,
And causes great sorrow at the time of death.

(8) While we preoccupy ourself with the things of this life,
Our whole life passes without any meaning.
For the sake of impermanent friends and relatives,
We neglect the Dharma that leads to permanent liberation.

(9) By behaving in such a childish way,
We definitely create the causes of lower rebirth.
Since worldly beings lead us to unfortunate states,
What is the point of relying on them?

(10) One moment they are friends,
The next moment they become enemies;
And even while they are enjoying themselves, they become angry –
How unreliable worldly beings are!

(11) If I tell them about something that is meaningful, they become angry
And even try to prevent me from engaging in that meaningful action;
Yet if I do not listen to what they say, they become angry with that
And in so doing create the causes of lower rebirth!

(12) The childish are jealous of anyone superior to them,
Competitive with their equals, and arrogant towards their inferiors.
They are conceited when praised but get angry if criticized.
There is never any benefit in being attached to them.

(13) As a result of associating with the childish,
We naturally engage in unwholesome actions
Such as praising ourself, disparaging others,
And discussing the importance of worldly pleasures.

(14) The relationships I have made with the childish
Have been completely deceptive,
For the childish have done nothing to fulfil my wishes
And I have done nothing to fulfil theirs.

(15) Therefore, I should withdraw to a great distance from the childish.
If I should subsequently meet them, I should please them by being happy
And, without becoming too close,
Act in agreeable ways according to convention.

(16) Just as a bee takes pollen from a flower,
So should I gather only what I need to sustain my practice
And then, without clinging, return to abide in solitude
As if I had never met anyone.

(17) If people think I have many possessions,
They will respect me and like me;
But if I harbour this kind of pride,
I shall experience terrible fears after I die.

(18) O thoroughly confused mind,
For as many objects as you accumulate,
You will have to endure a thousand times more suffering
Because of your attachment to them.

(19) Thus, because objects of attachment give rise to fear,
The wise should not become attached,
But remain firm in the understanding
That by their very nature these things are to be left behind.

(20) Even if I have acquired many possessions,
Fame, and a good reputation,
None of these things
Can go with me when I die.

(21) Why am I unhappy when someone criticizes me
And happy when I am praised?
Both criticism and praise are just empty words,
Like echoes in an empty cave.

(22) Living beings have so many different inclinations
That even Buddha is unable to satisfy them all;
So what chance do I, an ordinary confused being, have?
Therefore, I should give up the wish to associate with worldly beings.

(23) They look down on those who do not have wealth
And despise those who do.
How can people who are so hard to get along with
Ever see anything but faults in me?

(24) Whenever their wishes are not fulfilled,
The childish become unhappy.
This is why the Tathagatas have advised us
Not to associate with them.

(25) When shall I withdraw into the forest
And live among the trees
With birds and deer who say nothing unpleasant
But are a joy to live with?

(26) Or dwell in a cave or an empty shrine,
Or abide beneath the trees,
With a mind unfettered by attachment,
Which never turns to look back?

(27) When shall I live in a place that no one calls "mine" –
A place that is naturally open and spacious,
Where I can act freely and do as I wish,
Without any attachment to body or possessions?

(28) With just a few possessions, such as a begging bowl
And clothes that no one else wants,
I shall be free from any danger of thieves and robbers.
In this way, I should live without grasping onto "I" or "mine".

(29) I should withdraw to a burial ground
And meditate on the impermanence of my body
By thinking that it is really no different from a dead body,
For both are decaying moment by moment.

(30) It might happen that, when I die,
My body will decay quickly and emit an odour so foul
That not even foxes will want to come near it!
I should happily accept that such things could happen.

(31) If this body, which is one unit,
Will break into separate pieces
Of flesh and bone,
What can be said of my relationships?

(32) At birth I was born alone
And at death I shall have to die alone.
Since I cannot share these sufferings with others,
What use are friends who prevent me from practising virtue?

(33) Just as people who travel have no attachment
To a guesthouse where they stay for just one night,
So should I not develop attachment to this body,
Which is the guesthouse for just one rebirth.

(34) Before such time as this body of mine
Is borne aloft by four pall bearers
And worldly beings grieve my passing,
I will withdraw to the solitude of the forest.

(35) Encountering neither friends nor enemies,
My body will remain in complete solitude.
If I am already counted among the dead,
There will be no one to mourn me when I die.

(36) Then, with no one around me
Grieving or planning harm,
Who will there be to distract me
From my recollection of holy Buddha?

(37) Therefore, I will dwell alone
In a quiet and peaceful place.
Happy, contented, and with no worries,
I will strive to pacify all distractions.

(38) Having given up all other desires
And being motivated solely by bodhichitta,
I will strive to attain single-pointed concentration
And control my mind by recollecting the meaning of emptiness.

(39) Deluded desires give rise to misfortune
In both this and future lives.
In this life they cause injury, incarceration, and death,
And in the next the sufferings of the lower realms.

(40) For the sake of acquiring a sexual partner,
People send messages through go-betweens
And, disregarding any harm to their reputation,
Commit all manner of non-virtue.

(41) Although we engage in harmful actions
And even sacrifice all our wealth for them,
What is the real nature of these bodies
That we like so much to embrace?

(42) They are nothing other than skeletons
That are neither autonomous nor inherently existent.
Rather than being so desirous and attached to them,
Why do I not strive to pass beyond sorrow instead?

(43) When we are very attached to someone,
We want to see their face again and again;
But, whether we see their face or not,
The real face always remains covered with skin.

(44) If we were to remove that skin,
We would realize that they are not an object of desire
But an object of aversion;
So why do we develop attachment for others' bodies?

(45) Although we jealously guard our lover from others' advances,
The Lord of Death will take him from us
And his body will be burned or buried in the ground;
So what is the point of our jealousy and attachment?

(46) Others' bodies to which we are very attached
Are just collections of flesh and bone.
At any moment, they could be destroyed by the Lord of Death;
So why develop attachment to them?

(47) When we see a human corpse, which is a mere collection of flesh and bone,
We develop fear even though it does not move;
So why are we not fearful of living bodies, which are also just collections of flesh and bone
Moving here and there like zombies?

(48) Since both dead bodies and living bodies
Are mere collections of flesh and bone,
Why am I attracted to living bodies but not to dead ones?
Thinking in this way, I should stop attachment to others' bodies.

(49) Both saliva and urine come from the same source –
The intake of fluids into the body –
So why is it that we like saliva when kissing
But have no desire for urine?

(50) Although cotton is also soft to touch,
You find no sexual pleasure in a pillow.
Rather, you think the body does not emit foul smells –
O desirous mind, you are so confused about what is unclean!

(51) Just as we sometimes get angry at other people,
Why don't we also get angry at pillows?
For, although they too are soft to touch,
We cannot copulate with them!

(52) We might feel that what we are attracted to is not impure;
And yet we want to copulate with others' bodies,
Which are just cages of bone tied together with muscles
And plastered over with the mud of flesh!

(72) When we are young, we do not have the resources
to support a partner;
And later we are so busy that there is no time to
enjoy ourself.
When at last we have accumulated the resources
we need,
We are too old to indulge our desires!

(73) Some, under the influence of desire, work like
slaves.
They tire themselves out working long days
And, when they return home in the evening,
Their exhausted bodies collapse like corpses.

(74) Some have to experience the disruptions of travel
Or suffer from being far from home.
Although they long to be close to their partners,
They do not see them for years at a time.

(75) Some, confused about how to earn what they desire,
Effectively sell themselves to others.
Even then they do not get what they want
But are driven without meaning by the needs of
others.

(76) Then there are those who sell themselves into
servitude
And work for others without any freedom.
They live in lonely, desolate places
Where their children are born with only trees for
shelter.

(77) Deceived by desire, people become fools.
Some think, "I need money to support my life",
And, although they fear for their lives, go off to war;
While others enslave themselves for the sake of profit!

(78) Some, as a consequence of their desires,
Suffer cuts to their bodies
Or are stabbed, impaled,
Or even burned.

(79) We should realize that a preoccupation with wealth leads to endless problems
Because acquiring it, protecting it, and losing it all involve pain.
Those who allow themselves to become distracted out of attachment to wealth
Will find no opportunity to escape from the miseries of samsara.

(80) People attached to a worldly life
Experience many such problems, and for little reward.
They are like a horse forced to pull a cart,
Who can grab only an occasional mouthful of grass to eat.

(81) Those who are driven by uncontrolled desires
Waste this precious freedom and endowment, so hard to find,
For the sake of a few petty rewards that are in no way rare,
For even animals can obtain them.

(82) Our objects of desire will definitely perish,
And then we shall fall into the lower realms.
If we consider all the hardships we have endured since beginningless time
In pursuing meaningless worldly pleasures,

(83) We could have attained the state of a Buddha
For a fraction of the difficulty!
Worldly beings experience much greater suffering than those who follow the path to enlightenment –
And yet they do not attain enlightenment as a result!

(84) If we consider the sufferings of hell and so on,
We shall see that the discomforts endured by worldly people in this life –
Such as those caused by weapons, poison, enemies, or treacherous places –
Bear no comparison in their severity.

(85) Thus, having become disillusioned with worldly desires,
We should generate the wish to abide in solitude.
Fortunate ones stroll in quiet and peaceful places,
Far away from all conflict and objects of delusion.

(86) Cooled by flower-scented moonlight
And fanned by peaceful, silent breezes,
They abide joyfully without distraction,
With their minds focused on benefiting others.

(87) They dwell for as long as they wish
In empty houses, beneath trees, or in remote caves.
Having abandoned the pain of clinging to and guarding possessions,
They live independently, free from all cares.

(88) They live freely without attachment
And unbound by any relationships.
Even the most powerful humans and gods
Cannot find a life as contented and happy as this!

(89) Thus, having contemplated
The good qualities of solitude,
I should completely pacify all disturbing conceptions
And meditate on bodhichitta.

(90) First, I should apply myself to meditation
On the equality of self and others.
Because we are all equal in wanting to experience happiness and avoid suffering,
I should cherish all beings as I do myself.

(91) Although there are many different parts of the body, such as the arms and the legs,
We protect all these parts as equally as we protect the body itself.
In a similar way, although there are many different living beings,
I should cherish them all as equally as I cherish myself.

(92) The suffering I experience
Does not harm others,
But I find it hard to bear
Because I cherish myself.

(93) Likewise, the suffering of others
Does not harm me,
But, if I cherish others,
I shall find their suffering hard to bear.

(94) Therefore, I should dispel others' suffering
Simply because it is suffering, just like mine;
And I should bring happiness to others
Simply because they are living beings, just like me.

Purifying Negativity



To the Able Ones, the supreme objects of offering,
I offer all the beautiful, scented flowers –
Mandaras, upalas, lotuses, and so forth –
And exquisite garlands, finely arranged.

(107) Because one whose mind is acquainted with the equality of self and others
Derives great joy from relieving the suffering of others,
For their sakes, he or she would happily enter the deepest hell,
Just like a wild goose plunging into a refreshing lotus pool.

(108) The ocean of joy that will arise
When all living beings are liberated
Is everything I wish for –
So why should I wish for my solitary liberation?

(109) But although I work for the benefit of others,
I should do so without pride or pretension.
Moved only by the joy of benefiting others,
I should not hope for any reward.

(110) And just as I protect myself
From anything unpleasant, however small,
So should I act towards others
With a compassionate and caring mind.

(111) Although there is no I there,
Through the force of familiarity
I cling to an I within a body
That arose from the drops of others' sperm and blood.

(112) In the same way, why can I not
Identify "I" with the bodies of others?
Equally, I should not find it hard
To identify "other" with my own body.

(113) Seeing the faults of cherishing myself
And the many good qualities of cherishing others,
I should completely forsake self-cherishing
And become familiar with cherishing others.

(114) Just as I regard the hands and so forth
As limbs of my body,
So should I regard all living beings
As limbs of a living whole.

(115) Through the force of familiarity, I generate a mind
That grasps at I with respect to this non-self-existent body;
So why, through familiarity with cherishing others,
Should I not develop a mind that grasps at I with respect to others' bodies?

(116) Although I work for others in this way,
I should not develop pride or pretension;
And, just as when I feed myself,
I should hope for nothing in return.

(117) Therefore, just as I protect myself
From anything unpleasant, however small,
So should I become familiar with
A compassionate and caring mind towards others.

(118) Out of his great compassion,
Arya Avalokiteshvara even blessed his own name
To relieve living beings from the fear of self-cherishing;
So I should recite his name mantra to receive his blessings.

(156) Therefore, I will definitely engage
In working for the benefit of others;
And because Buddha's teachings are non-deceptive,
I shall experience excellent results in the future.

(157) If in the past I had practised
Exchanging myself with others,
I would not now be in this situation –
Devoid of the excellent happiness and bliss of Buddhahood.

(158) Just as I am familiar with developing the thought "I", "I",
When perceiving my body, which arose from others' sperm and blood,
So should I become familiar with developing the thought "I", "I",
When perceiving others' bodies.

(159) Examining myself thoroughly
To make sure I am working for others,
I will take whatever I possess
And use it to benefit them.

(160) I am happy but others are sad;
I have a high position but others are lowly;
I benefit myself but not others –
Why am I not jealous of myself?

(161) I must give my happiness to others
And take their suffering upon myself instead.
I should constantly examine my behaviour for faults
By asking, "Why am I acting in this way?"

(162) If others do something wrong,
I will transform it into a fault of my own;
But if I cause even the slightest harm to others,
I will declare it openly in the presence of many.

(163) I should spread the fame of others farther,
So that it completely outshines my own;
And, regarding myself as a lowly servant,
Employ myself in the service of all.

(164) Being full of faults, I should not praise myself
Just because of some superficial good quality.
I will not let even a few people know
Of any good qualities I might possess.

(165) In short, may the harm I have caused others
For the sake of myself
Return and ripen upon me
For the sake of others.

(166) I should not be domineering
Or act in self-righteous ways.
Rather, I should be like a newly-wed
Who is bashful, timid, and restrained.

(167) In this way, selfish mind, you should avoid
non-virtue.
If you do not observe this discipline,
I will bring you under control
Through the power of mindfulness and alertness.

(168) However, if you choose not to act
In the way that you have been advised,
Since you are the source of all my misfortune
I will completely annihilate you.

(169) The time when you could govern me
Has been consigned to the past.
Now that I see you to be the source of all my problems,
I will eradicate you wherever you appear.

(170) Now I will immediately cast aside
All thoughts to work for my own sake.
O self-cherishing mind, I have sold you to others;
So stop complaining and get on with helping them!

(171) If, out of non-conscientiousness,
I were not to give you to others,
You would certainly deliver me
To the guardians of hell!

(172) You have done this to me often enough in the past
And, as a result, I have suffered for a very long time;
But now that I have brought to mind all my grudges towards you,
I am determined to destroy you, selfish mind.

(173) Thus, if I want happiness,
I should not be happy with the self-cherishing mind;
And if I want protection,
I should always protect others.

(174) To whatever extent I seek
To fulfil the desires of the body,
To that extent I shall experience
A state of dissatisfaction.

(175) The desires of the self-cherishing mind
Cannot be satisfied
Even by all the wealth in the world –
So how can we hope to fulfil all its wishes?

(176) When our desires are not fulfilled,
We develop delusions and a dissatisfied mind;
But whoever becomes free from such distracting concerns
Will never know dissatisfaction.

(177) Therefore, I will never allow
The desires of the body to increase.
A person who has no attachment to attractive objects
Will find contentment – the best of all possessions.

(178) My body is a frightening, impure form
That cannot move without depending upon mind
And that eventually will completely disintegrate;
So why do I grasp at it as "I"?

(179) Whether it lives or dies,
What use is it to me to grasp at this machine?
It is no different from grasping at a clod of earth;
So why do I not give up the pride of grasping "my body"?

(180) As a result of attending to the body's desires,
I have experienced much suffering without real meaning.
What is the point of generating anger or attachment
For the sake of something that is like a piece of wood?

(181) Whether I care for it in the way that I do,
Or allow it to be harmed by others,
The body itself develops neither attachment nor anger;
So why do I feel so attached to it?

(182) Since the body itself does not know
Anger when it is insulted
Or attachment when it is praised,
Why do I go to so much trouble for its sake?

(183) *"But I want to cherish this body*
Because it is very beneficial to me."
Then why not cherish all living beings,
For they are very beneficial to us?

(184) Therefore, without any attachment,
I will give up my body for the benefit of all;
But, although it might have many faults,
I will look after it while I am working for others.

(185) I will put a stop to all childish behaviour
And follow in the steps of the wise Bodhisattvas.
Recalling the instructions on conscientiousness,
I will turn away from sleep, mental dullness, and the like.

(186) Just like the compassionate Sons and Daughters of the Conqueror Buddha,
I will patiently apply myself to whatever needs to be done.
If I do not apply constant effort throughout the day and the night,
When will my misery ever come to an end?

(187) Therefore, to dispel both obstructions,
I will withdraw my mind from all distracting conceptions
And place it in constant meditative equipoise
On the perfect object of meditation, the correct view of emptiness.

This concludes the eighth chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Relying upon Mental Stabilization".

The Perfection of Wisdom



Buddha taught all the method practices explained
above
To enable us to complete the training in wisdom
realizing emptiness.
Therefore, those who wish to liberate themselves
and others from suffering
Should strive to develop this wisdom.

CHAPTER 9

The Perfection of Wisdom

(1) Buddha taught all the method practices explained above
To enable us to complete the training in wisdom realizing emptiness.
Therefore, those who wish to liberate themselves and others from suffering
Should strive to develop this wisdom.

(2) The two truths are explained as conventional truths and ultimate truths.
Ultimate truth, emptiness, is a non-affirming negative phenomenon
That cannot be realized directly by a mind that has dualistic appearance,
For such minds are conventional, and thus mistaken awareness.

(3) Of those who assert the two truths, two types of person can be distinguished:
Madhyamika-Prasangika Yogis and proponents of things.
The views held by the proponents of things, who assert that things are truly existent,
Are refuted by the logical reasonings of the Prasangika Yogis.

(4) Moreover, among the Prasangika Yogis, there are different levels of insight –
Those with greater understanding surpassing those with lesser understanding.
All establish their view through valid analytical reasons.
Giving and so forth are practised without investigation for the sake of achieving resultant Buddhahood.

(5) When you proponents of things see things,
You do not recognize their illusion-like character
But assert them to be inherently existent.
This is where we Madhyamika-Prasangikas disagree with you.

(6) Forms that we see directly are just mere appearance to mind.
They exist falsely because the way they appear
Does not correspond to the way they exist,
Just as a human body is conventionally accepted as clean when in reality it is impure.

(7) Buddha taught the impermanence of things
To lead people gradually to a realization of
emptiness –
The lack of inherent existence of things.
*"Then it is incorrect to say that things exist even
conventionally."*

(8) No, there is no fault, because things exist by
conventional valid cognizers.
From the point of view of worldly people, seeing
things is seeing reality;
But worldly people never actually see reality
Because the real nature of things is their emptiness.

(9) Just as you receive merits you consider to be truly
existent from making offerings to a Buddha you
consider to be truly existent,
So we receive illusion-like merits from making
offerings to an illusion-like Buddha.
*"If, as you say, living beings lack true existence and are
like illusions,
How can they take rebirth after they die?"*

(10) Provided all the necessary conditions are
assembled,
Even an illusion will come into being.
Why, simply by virtue of their longer duration,
Should living beings be any more true?

(11) Killing an illusion incurs no actual karma of killing
Because an illusion has no mind,
But benefiting or harming an illusion-like person
who has an illusion-like mind
Gives rise to merit and negativity respectively.

(12) Because the mantras and so forth that cause an illusion cannot produce mind,
An illusion does not develop a mind.
Different types of cause
Give rise to different types of illusion.

(13) There does not exist a single cause that is capable of
Giving rise to a variety of different results.
"If, as you say, nirvana is not truly existent,
But samsara exists conventionally,

(14) *"Then Buddha must be in samsara because nirvana does not exist;*
So what is the point of practising the Bodhisattva's way of life?"
Even an illusion does not cease if the continuum of its causes is not cut,
But once the continuum of samsara's causes, delusions, is severed,

(15) Samsara will not occur, even conventionally.
Since Buddhas have done this, they have attained nirvana.
"The illusion-like forms that you assert do not exist,
Because you assert that illusion-like awareness lacks true existence."

(16) Since for you Chittamatrins such illusion-like forms do not exist,
How do forms exist?
"Although forms do not exist as external objects, they do exist in another way –
A form is an aspect, the nature of the mind to which it appears."

(17) You Chittamatrins assert that mind itself appears in
the aspect of form.
If this is so, how does the mind arise?
Buddha, the Protector of the World, has said
That the mind cannot behold itself.

(18) For example, just as the blade of a sword cannot
cut itself,
So a mind cannot behold itself.
*"On the contrary, just as a lamp can illuminate both
itself and the objects around it,
So the mind can behold both itself and other phenomena."*

(19) If a lamp illuminates itself, then darkness obscures
itself,
And it follows that no one can see darkness
because it is obscured!
*"When clear crystal turns blue, it does so in dependence
upon something else;
But lapis lazuli is by nature blue – it does not depend
upon anything else to appear blue.*

(20) *"Similarly, some awarenesses are related to objects other
than themselves,
Whereas others, such as self-cognizers, are not."*
The blueness of lapis lazuli does not exist without
depending upon anything else –
It does not create its own nature!

(21) *"Even though a lamp does not illuminate itself, it is the
nature of illumination."*
Then you should say that mind does not know
itself
But is the nature of conscious illumination.
However, you cannot say that it is known by a
mind that is substantially different from itself.

(22) According to you, if there is no truly existent awareness that knows mind,
Then mind does not exist;
In which case it makes no more sense to discuss whether the mind illuminates itself or not
Than it does to discuss the looks of the daughter of a childless person.

(23) *"If self-cognizers do not exist,*
How do we remember subjective consciousness?"
When we remember the object experienced, we remember the consciousness related to it,
Just as we would recall being poisoned by an animal bite when we experienced the pain that subsequently occurred.

(24) *"If people who have attained states such as tranquil abiding can see the minds of others far away,*
Surely one can see one's own mind, which is very close."
People who apply magical eye lotion can see treasure vases deep beneath the ground,
But they cannot see the lotion!

(25) We have no intention of refuting the existence of
Eye awareness, ear awareness, or any other awareness.
What needs to be abandoned is the awareness that grasps at truly existent forms and so forth,
Which is the fundamental cause of all suffering.

(26) *"Illusion-like forms are not other than the mind,*
But neither can they be considered to be one with the mind."
If they are true, why say they are not other than the mind?
And if they are not other than the mind, why say they are true?

(27) Just as illusion-like forms lack any true existence,
So it is with the mind that beholds them.
"Samsara, like all imputed objects, must have something substantial as its basis;
Otherwise, it would be completely empty, just like space."

(28) If imputed phenomena, such as samsara, had truly existent bases,
How could you ever become bound in samsara and how could you ever escape from it?
According to you, mind cannot be an apprehender related to something it apprehends;
Rather, it must be an isolated cognition of itself.

(29) If the mind exists inherently, or independently,
Then it is already free from all defilements,
And it follows that all living beings are already enlightened!
So what is the point of teaching that everything is just the nature of mind?

(30) *"How does realizing that all phenomena are like illusions*
Eliminate delusions?
After all, a magician who creates an illusion of a woman
Can still develop attachment for that illusory woman."

(31) This is because the magician has not abandoned
The deluded tendency to grasp at true existence.
Thus, when he beholds the illusory woman,
His tendency to perceive her emptiness is very weak.

(32) By developing acquaintance with the view of emptiness,
We shall eventually abandon grasping at true existence;
And especially by meditating on the emptiness of emptiness,
We shall come to abandon grasping at emptiness itself as being truly existent.

(33) When it is said that "No thing exists",
This means that truly existent things do not exist;
So how could a mind grasping at the true existence of that emptiness remain
When the basis for such a misconception – grasping at true existence – has been removed?

(34) Eventually, when the true existence of things and the true existence of emptiness
No longer appear to the mind,
Since there is no other aspect of true existence,
The mind will abide in the resultant pacified state in which all conceptuality has ceased.

(35) Just as wish-fulfilling jewels and wish-granting trees fulfil the hopes of humans and gods
Even though they have no conceptual mind,
So, through the force of the prayers they previously made and the merit accumulated by fortunate beings,
Buddhas manifest physical forms in this world.

(36) For example, although the Brahmin who consecrated
The substance in the reliquary known as the "Garuda"
Has long since passed away,
The reliquary continues to alleviate poisons and so forth.

(37) In a similar fashion, a Bodhisattva, while training on the path,
Creates the "reliquary" of a Buddha through his collections of merit and wisdom;
And, although he eventually passes beyond sorrow,
He continues to bestow both temporary and ultimate benefits upon all living beings.

(38) *"But if Buddha has no conceptual mind,*
How can there be meritorious results from making offerings to him?"
It is said in the scriptures that the results will be the same
Whether the Buddha to whom we make offerings is living or has passed away.

(39) Moreover, the scriptures say that the results we receive depend upon our degree of faith,
Whether we think Buddha is conventionally or ultimately existent when we make the offerings.
Just as you receive merits from making offerings to a Buddha you consider to be truly existent,
So do we receive merits from making offerings to an illusion-like Buddha.

(40) *"Since we can attain liberation by gaining a direct realization of the four noble truths,*
What is the point of striving to realize emptiness, lack of true existence?"
It is necessary because the scriptures explain that without the path of wisdom realizing this emptiness,
It is impossible to attain even the small enlightenment of self-liberation.

(41-4) *"Because we do not believe in the Mahayana, your quoting from Mahayana scriptures is pointless."*
We both believe that the Hinayana scriptures are valid;
So you should apply your reasons for believing the Hinayana equally to the Mahayana.
Thus, we understand that both are the holy Dharma taught by Buddha himself.

Because they do not understand its profundity,
The Vaibhashika schools deny the Mahayana;
And because they do not believe in nirvana,
Some non-Buddhist schools deny the Hinayana.

Buddha's purpose in teaching both the Mahayana and the Hinayana
Was to lead living beings to permanent liberation from the cycle of suffering.
Focusing on this ultimate aim, practitioners of both the Mahayana and the Hinayana
Emphasize the three higher trainings of moral discipline, concentration, and wisdom.

(45) Buddha gave his teachings as medicine to cure the disease of the delusions, the cause of all suffering.
Some of his teachings are simple and others are very profound.
If you do not understand his higher, more profound teachings,
You should not simply conclude that they were not taught by Buddha.

(46) The great Master Kashyapa gathered many of Buddha's teachings,
Principally the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*, Buddha's Mahayana teachings.
However, the Vaibhashika schools do not understand the profound meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*;
Thus, they conclude that these Sutras are not Buddha's teachings.

(47) The principal holders of Buddhadharma were said to be those who have attained nirvana, the Arhats;
But the Arhats that you proponents of things assert
Cannot be real Arhats because, according to your view,
Their minds still grasp at truly existent things.

(48) *"They attained nirvana, or liberation, and became Arhats because they abandoned their delusions."*
You seem to think that, simply by abandoning manifest delusions, one immediately becomes an Arhat;
But it is clear that even though a person might have temporarily abandoned manifest delusions,
Nevertheless, he or she still bears the karmic potentials to be reborn in samsara.

(49) *"The abandonment that Arhats achieve is not temporary. They definitely do not take rebirth in samsara again*
Because they completely abandon craving, the principal cause of such rebirth."
But just as you say that they have non-deluded confusion,
Why not also say that they have non-deluded craving?

(50) These so-called Arhats have pleasant feelings
That they apprehend to be truly existent.
Because of feeling, craving develops –
So they must be subject to the craving.

(51) Although for a person who has not realized emptiness – the lack of truly existent things –
Manifest delusions might be temporarily abandoned, eventually they will manifest again,
Just as feelings and discriminations return when the concentration on the absorption without discrimination ends.
Therefore, you must strive to realize emptiness to attain even solitary liberation.

(52) The result of a Bodhisattva's meditation on emptiness
Is the ability to remain in the abodes of samsara
Out of compassion for those who suffer due to confusion,
And free from the extremes of attachment and fear.

(53) Since the realization of emptiness is the antidote that removes the darkness
Of the delusion-obstructions and the obstructions to knowing,
Why do those who wish to attain enlightenment
Not meditate on emptiness right away?

(54) Thus, it is quite inappropriate to cast aspersions
On those who hold the view of emptiness;
Rather, you should meditate without any doubt
On emptiness, lack of true existence.

(55) By all means, be afraid of something
That is the principal cause of samsaric suffering;
But, since meditation on emptiness eliminates this suffering,
Why should you be afraid of emptiness?

(56) If there were a truly existent I,
It would make sense to be afraid of certain things;
But, since there is no truly existent I,
Who is there to be afraid?

(57) The teeth, hair, or nails are not the I,
Nor are the bones or blood.
The mucus and phlegm are not the I,
Nor are the lymph or pus.

(58) The body's fat or sweat are not the I,
Nor are the lungs or liver.
None of the other inner organs is the I,
Nor are the excrement or urine.

(59) The flesh or skin are not the I,
Nor are the body's warmth or winds.
The space element of the body is not the I,
Nor are any of the six consciousnesses.

(60) If, as the Samkhya school asserts, a permanent consciousness is the I,
Then the consciousness that enjoys sound is also permanent;
But how can it continue to enjoy sound
When the object, sound, is no longer present?

(61) If it can be a subjective consciousness even though its object does not exist,
Then it follows that even a piece of wood can be a subjective consciousness.
Nothing can be established as a consciousness
If there is no object of which to be conscious.

(62) *"When no sound is present, the consciousness enjoys other objects such as visual forms."*
But if it is permanent, why does it not continue to apprehend sound?
"Because there is no sound in the vicinity at that time."
Well, if there is no object, sound, then there is no subjective apprehender of sound!

(63) Moreover, how can an awareness whose nature it is to apprehend sound
Also be an awareness whose nature it is to apprehend visual forms?
"It is like one person who can be considered to be both a father and a son."
But this is mere imputation; he is not by nature both.

(64) The analogy of father and son does not work for you Samkhyas.
According to you, the independent creator of all manifests all forms.
Thus, father and son must be one nature, as must an apprehender of sound and an apprehender of visual forms –
But such things are not seen by a valid mind.

(65) *"It is like an actor changing roles and being seen in different aspects."*
Well, if the I changes in this way, it cannot be permanent!
"Although the aspects change, its nature remains one and the same."
But you cannot establish an unchangeable nature of the I, because you deny the ultimate nature of I, the lack of a truly existent I.

(66) *"The different aspects are not true, only their nature is."*
If the aspects are not true, why say their nature is true?
"Their nature is true and the same in that they are both merely conscious apprehenders."
Well then, all living beings must be one and the same because they are all conscious apprehenders.

(67) Moreover, it follows that animate and inanimate phenomena must be one and the same,
As creations of the general principle, the independent creator of all.
If all the particular aspects are false,
How can their basis, their nature, be true?

(68) The material I asserted by materialists also cannot be the I,
Because it is devoid of mind, just like a jug.
"But it has a relationship with mind and so it can know objects."
When the self, or I, comes to know something, the former self that did not know ceases;

(77) It is suffering and its causes that need to be
abandoned,
And it is the ignorance of self-grasping that causes
delusions and suffering to increase.
*"But there is no way to abandon self-grasping so that it
will never recur."*
On the contrary, meditation on selflessness, or
emptiness, is the supreme method for
accomplishing this.

(78) Neither the feet nor the calves are the body,
Nor are the thighs or the loins.
Neither the front nor the back of the abdomen is
the body,
Nor are the chest or the shoulders.

(79) Neither the sides nor the hands are the body,
Nor are the arms or the armpits.
None of the inner organs is the body,
Nor is the head or the neck.
So where is the body to be found?

(80) If you say that the body is distributed
Among all its different parts,
Although we can say that the parts exist in the
parts,
Where does a separate possessor of these parts
abide?

(81) And if you say that the entire body exists
Within each part, such as the hand,
It follows that there are as many bodies
As there are different parts!

(91) *"So what you are saying is that painful feelings do not occur at that time*
Because the delicious taste is a cause of their opposite – pleasant feelings."
Whether it is a cause of pleasant or painful feelings depends merely upon conceptual imputation;
Thus, feelings are established as having no inherent existence.

(92) The antidote that abandons grasping at truly existent feelings
Is meditation on and analysis of lack of true existence.
The superior seeing that arises from analysis of this emptiness, conjoined with tranquil abiding,
Is the food that nourishes the Yogi's realizations.

(93) If there is space between the partless particles of a sense power and those of its object,
How can you maintain that they have met?
But if there is no space between them, they must mix and become completely one;
In which case, what is it that meets with what?

(94) But one partless particle could never penetrate another
Because they would both be equal in size without any empty space inside.
Without penetrating, they could not mix;
And without mixing, they could not meet.

(95) To say that two partless things can meet
Is completely illogical.
If it were possible, you would be able to detect it;
So please show me an example!

(106) *"Well then, it follows that phenomena cannot exist even conventionally,*
In which case your presentation of the two truths is invalid.
Moreover, if conventional truths are merely imputed by mistaken minds,
How can living beings pass beyond sorrow even nominally?"

(107) According to our system, to exist conventionally
Does not mean to be imputed by a mind grasping at true existence.
A conventional truth, such as body, is imputed by a valid conceptual mind having perceived a valid basis of imputation.
Without such imputation by a valid mind, there would be no conventional truths.

(108) The imputing mind and the object imputed
Are established in mutual dependence upon each other.
Each distinct phenomenon is posited by an analytical mind
According to what is validly known in the world.

(109) *"When an analytical mind realizes an object to be non-truly existent,*
Another analytical mind must analyze that mind to realize that it too is non-truly existent.
That analytical mind, in turn, must be analyzed by another,
And so the process is endless, which is absurd."

(110) When a valid mind directly realizes the lack of true existence of all phenomena,
The true existence of that mind is implicitly negated at the same time.
This non-true existence of both subject and object
Is also called the "natural state of nirvana".

(111) Despite your attempts, you Chittamatrins are unable to establish
The true existence of the apprehending mind and the object apprehended.
"On the contrary, forms, for example, are truly existent because consciousness apprehends them to be so."
How can you establish anything with a consciousness that is truly existent?

(112) *"We can establish that consciousness is truly existent because the objects it apprehends are truly existent."*
If you say this, on what basis is the true existence of these objects established,
Given that they and the consciousness that apprehends them are mutually dependent?
Surely this demonstrates that both consciousness and its object lack true existence.

(113) For example, if a man has no child, he cannot be a father;
And if there is no father, how can there be a child?
Since without a child, there is no father, they are mutually dependent and therefore neither is truly existent.
It is likewise with consciousness and its object.

(114) *"From the fact that a truly existent sprout arises from a seed,*
We can understand the true existence of the seed.
So why, from the fact that a truly existent consciousness arises from an object,
Can we not understand that the object too is truly existent?"

(115) It is true that the existence of a seed can be inferred from the existence of its sprout
By a consciousness that is substantially distinct from that sprout;
But what consciousness can cognize a truly existent consciousness
That, according to you, indicates the true existence of its object?

(116) Even worldly people can see clearly
That most things arise from causes.
The different types of coloured lotus, for example,
Arise from a variety of different causes.

(117) *"And what gave rise to that variety of causes?"*
A previous variety of causes.
"But how does a distinct cause give rise to a distinct effect?"
Each effect is produced from a specific potentiality in its preceding cause.

(118) If you Samkhyas want to say that Ishvara is the creator of all things,
Then please explain who or what Ishvara is.
"He is basically the nature of the four great elements."
Then why go to the trouble of giving them the name "Ishvara"?

(119) Since the elements such as earth are multiple substances,
Impermanent, unmoved by mind, non-divine,
And something trodden upon and unclean,
They cannot possibly be Ishvara.

(120) Space is not Ishvara because it cannot produce anything,
And a permanent self cannot be Ishvara because this has already been refuted.
"Although he is the creator, Ishvara is unknowable."
What is the point of talking about something that cannot be known?

(121) Precisely what is it that Ishvara is supposed to create?
"He creates the world, living beings, and his own subsequent continuum."
But if this is so, how did such an independent creator himself develop?
Moreover, consciousness is produced from its previous continuum,

(122) And, since beginningless time, happiness and suffering have been created by karma, or actions.
So, tell us, what does Ishvara create?
If the cause has no beginning,
The effect must also have no beginning.

(123) So why, if their production does not depend upon other conditions,
Are effects such as happiness and suffering not constantly produced without interruption?
And if, as you say, there is nothing other than phenomena created by Ishvara,
Upon what conditions does Ishvara depend when he creates an effect?

(158) We shall continue to experience an unending ocean of suffering
That is so unbearable it is beyond analogy.
Even in fortunate rebirths, we shall have little ability to practise virtue,
And our lives of freedom and endowment will quickly pass.

(159) We are constantly striving to avoid sickness and death,
Fend off hunger, find some rest, or just get to sleep.
We receive harm from inner and outer obstacles,
And waste our lives in meaningless company.

(160) Thus, our life passes swiftly without any meaning,
And we find it very hard to realize emptiness.
In such a state, where is there a method to reverse
The deluded wanderings of the mind, with which we are so familiar?

(161) Furthermore, demonic forces are constantly striving
To cast us into the vast wasteland of the lower realms.
There are many mistaken paths to mislead us,
And we find it difficult to resolve stultifying doubts.

(162) It will be very hard to find the freedom and endowment of a human rebirth again.
Buddhas rarely appear in this world, and it is difficult to find a qualified Mahayana Spiritual Guide.
Without these, there is no way to stop the flood of delusions –
Alas, the suffering of living beings will continue without interruption!

CHAPTER 10

Dedication

(1) Through the virtues I have created
By composing *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life,*
May all living beings without exception
Practise the Bodhisattva's deeds.

(2) By virtue of my merits,
May all beings everywhere,
Tormented by sufferings of body and mind,
Find physical comfort and mental joy.

(3) For as long as they remain in samsara,
May their temporary happiness never decline;
And may they all eventually experience
The everlasting joy of Buddhahood.

(4) May all embodied creatures
Throughout the universe
Who are experiencing the pains of hell
Enjoy the bliss of Sukhavati Pure Land.

(5) May those tormented by cold find warmth,
And may those tormented by heat be cooled
By a continuous rain of soothing waters
Flowing from the vast clouds of the Bodhisattvas' merit and wisdom.

(6) May the forest of razor-sharp leaves
Become a delightful woodland glade,
And may the trees of splintered iron and piercing thorns
Transform into wish-fulfilling trees.

(7) May the regions of hell become joyful lands
Adorned with vast and fragrant lotus pools
Resounding with the enchanting calls
Of wild geese, ducks, and swans.

(8) May the heaps of burning coals become piles of various jewels,
May the red-hot iron ground become a soothing crystal floor,
And may the mountains of the crushing hells
Become celestial palaces of worship filled with Sugatas.

(9) May the hail of lava, blazing stones, and weapons
Henceforth become a rain of flowers,
And may all attacks with weapons
From now on become a playful exchange of flowers.

(10) May those drowning in the fiery torrents of acid –
Their flesh eaten away to reveal their lily-white bones –
Attain the bodies of celestial beings
And sport with consorts in gently flowing streams.

(11) *"Why are the henchmen of the Lord of Death and the unbearable buzzards and vultures so afraid?*
By whose noble power is the darkness of our suffering dispelled and joy bestowed upon us?"
Looking above them, those in hell will behold the radiant form of Vajrapani, the Holder of the Vajra.
Through the force of their new-found faith and joy, may they be freed from past evil and come to abide with him.

(12) When they see the lava fires of hell extinguished by a rain of flowers moist with scented waters,
And are immediately satiated with bliss,
They will wonder by whose hand this was brought about
And behold Pämapani, the Holder of the Lotus.

(13) *"Friends, cast away your fears and quickly gather here,*
For above us is the youthful Manjushri, whose radiant topknot dispels all fears.
Endowed with great compassion and bodhichitta, he protects all living beings,
And through his power dispels all suffering and bestows perfect joy.

(14) *"Behold him in his enchanting palace resounding with the songs of a thousand celestial beings,*
With hundreds of gods bowing before him, their tiaras touching his lotus feet,
And a vast rain of flowers falling upon his gracious head, his eyes moist with compassion."
Thus, upon seeing Manjushri, may all beings in hell cry out with joy.

(47) May they never experience the sufferings of the
lower realms
Or meet with hardships of body, speech, or mind.
May they have forms superior to those of the gods
And quickly attain the state of a Buddha.

(48) May all living beings again and again
Make offerings to the Buddhas.
May they become endowed with the eternal bliss
Of a fully enlightened being.

(49) May the Bodhisattvas fulfil the welfare of the world
In the very manner they have intended,
And may all living beings receive
Everything the Buddhas have intended for them.

(50) Likewise, may all Solitary Realizers and Hearers
Attain the happiness of nirvana.

(51) And until I attain the level of the Joyous One,
Through the blessings of Manjushri,
May I be concerned for all my future lives
And always receive ordination.

(52) May I always live humbly, sustained by simple
food.
Throughout all my lives, may I abide in solitude
And always find ideal conditions
For achieving my spiritual goals.

(53) Whenever I wish to see a scripture
Or compose even a single verse,
May I behold without obstruction
Protector Manjushri.

(54) To fulfil the needs of all living beings
Reaching to the ends of space,
May my way of life always resemble
That of Manjushri.

(55) For as long as space exists
And for as long as living beings remain in samsara,
May I abide among them
To dispel all their suffering.

(56) May all the suffering of all living beings
Ripen solely upon me;
And by the power of the Bodhisattvas' virtue and aspirations
May all beings experience happiness.

(57) May the Buddhadharma, the sole medicine for all suffering
And the source of all happiness,
Be materially supported and honoured,
And remain for a very long time.

(58) I prostrate to Manjushri,
Through whose kindness my virtuous intentions arise;
And I prostrate to my Spiritual Guide,
Through whose kindness my virtuous qualities increase.

This concludes the tenth chapter of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, entitled "Dedication".

This concludes *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, composed by the Buddhist Master Shantideva.

Glossary

Most of these terms are explained in detail in Geshe Kelsang's commentary, entitled Meaningful to Behold. *Where more detail can be found in Geshe Kelsang's other books, this is indicated in the glossary entry.*

Absorption without discrimination A concentration of the fourth form realm that observes nothingness and that is attained by stopping gross feelings and gross discriminations. See *Ocean of Nectar.*

Aggregates In general, all functioning things are aggregates because they are an aggregation of their parts. In particular, a person of the desire realm or form realm has five aggregates: the aggregates of form, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness. A being of the formless realm lacks the aggregate of form but has the other four. A person's form aggregate is his or her body. The remaining four aggregates are aspects of his mind. See *Heart of Wisdom.*

Anger A deluded mental factor that observes its contaminated object, exaggerates its bad qualities, considers it to be undesirable, and wishes to harm it.

Arhat Sanskrit word for "Foe Destroyer". A practitioner who has abandoned all delusions and their seeds by training on the spiritual paths, and who will never again be reborn in samsara. In this context, the term "Foe" refers to the delusions.

Arya Sanskrit word for "Superior being". Someone who has a direct, or non-conceptual, realization of emptiness. There are Hinayana Superiors and Mahayana Superiors.

Aspiring bodhichitta A mind that aspires to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings but that does not yet engage in the actual practices of the Bodhisattva's training. It is like someone intending to go somewhere but not yet setting out on the journey.

Attachment A deluded mental factor that observes a contaminated object, regards it as a cause of happiness, and wishes for it.

Avalokiteshvara "Chenrezig" in Tibetan. The embodiment of the compassion of all the Buddhas.

Basis of imputation All phenomena are imputed upon their parts; therefore, any of the individual parts, or the entire collection of the parts, of any phenomenon is its basis of imputation. A phenomenon is imputed by mind in dependence upon its basis of imputation appearing to that mind. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Beginningless time According to the Buddhist world view, there is no beginning to mind, and so no beginning to time. Therefore, all living beings have taken countless previous rebirths.

Blessings The transformation of our mind from a negative state to a positive state, from an unhappy state to a happy state, or from a state of weakness to a state of strength, through the inspiration of holy beings such as our Spiritual Guide, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas.

Bodhichitta Sanskrit word for "mind of enlightenment". "Bodhi" means "enlightenment", and "chitta" means "mind". There are two types of bodhichitta – conventional bodhichitta and ultimate bodhichitta. Generally speaking, the term "bodhichitta" refers to conventional bodhichitta, which is a primary mind motivated by great compassion that spontaneously seeks enlightenment to benefit all living beings. There are two types of conventional bodhichitta – aspiring bodhichitta and engaging bodhichitta. Ultimate bodhichitta is a wisdom motivated by conventional bodhichitta that directly realizes emptiness, the ultimate nature of phenomena. See also *Aspiring bodhichitta* and *Engaging bodhichitta*.

Bodhisattva A person who has generated spontaneous bodhichitta but who has not yet become a Buddha.

Brahma A worldly god, who resides in the first form realm.

Buddha A being who has completely abandoned all delusions and their imprints. Every living being has the potential to become a Buddha.

Chakravatin king An extremely fortunate being who has accumulated a vast amount of merit and as a result has taken rebirth as a king with dominion over all the four continents as described in Buddhist cosmology, or, at the very least, over one of the four continents. At present there are no chakravatin kings in our world, and there is no one who has complete dominion over our continent, Jambudipa. See *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Chekhawa, Bodhisattva (AD 1102-1176) A great Kadampa Bodhisattva who composed the text *Training the Mind in Seven Points*, a commentary to Bodhisattva Langri Tangpa's *Eight Verses of Training the Mind*. He spread the study and practice of training the mind throughout Tibet. See *Universal Compassion*.

Chittamatra The lower of the two schools of Mahayana tenets. "Chittamatra" means "mind only". They are so called because they assert that all phenomena are merely the nature of mind. A Chittamatrin is a proponent of Chittamatra tenets. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Collection of merit A virtuous action motivated by bodhichitta that is a main cause of attaining the Form Body of a Buddha. Examples are: making offerings and prostrations to holy beings with bodhichitta motivation, and the practice of the perfections of giving, moral discipline, and patience.

Collection of wisdom A virtuous mental action motivated by bodhichitta that is a main cause of attaining the Truth Body of a Buddha. Examples are: listening to, contemplating, and meditating on emptiness with bodhichitta motivation.

Compassion A virtuous mind that wishes others to be free from suffering.

Concentration A mental factor that makes its primary mind remain on its object single-pointedly.

Conceptual mind A thought that apprehends its object through a generic, or mental, image. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Confession Purification of negative karma by means of the four opponent powers. See *The Bodhisattva Vow*.

Conscientiousness A mental factor that, in dependence upon effort, cherishes what is virtuous and guards the mind from delusion and non-virtue.

Contact A mental factor that functions to perceive its object as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Contentment Being satisfied with one's inner and outer conditions, motivated by a virtuous intention.

Conventional truth Any phenomenon other than emptiness. Conventional truths are true with respect to the minds of ordinary beings, but in reality they are false. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Dedication Dedication is by nature a virtuous mental factor; it is the virtuous intention that functions both to prevent accumulated virtue from degenerating and to cause its increase. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Delusion A mental factor that arises from inappropriate attention and functions to make the mind unpeaceful and uncontrolled. There are three main delusions: ignorance, attachment, and anger. From these arise all the other delusions, such as jealousy, pride, and deluded doubt. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Demi-god A being of the demi-god realm, the second highest of the six realms of samsara. Demi-gods are similar to gods, but their bodies, possessions, and environments are inferior. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

(33) Since the untrustworthy Lord of Death
Will not wait while I purify my evils,
Regardless of whether I am sick or not,
This momentary life is unreliable.

(34) I shall have to leave everything and depart alone
But, through failing to understand this,
I have committed many kinds of evil action
With respect to my friends and others.

(35) And yet my friends will become nothing
And others will also become nothing.
Even I shall become nothing;
Likewise, everything will become nothing.

(36) Just like an experience in a dream,
Everything I now enjoy
Will become a mere recollection,
For what has passed cannot be seen again.

(37) Even during this brief life,
Many friends and others have passed away;
But the unbearable results of the evil I have
committed for their sake
Still lie ahead of me.

(38) Thus, through failing to realize
That I shall suddenly die,
I have committed many evils
Out of ignorance, attachment, and anger.

(39) Remaining still neither day nor night,
This life is continuously slipping away
And never increases in duration;
So why should death not come to one such as me?

Extreme of attachment Attachment to the true existence of phenomena, which causes one to remain in samsara due to delusion and karma. Also known as the "extreme of samsara".

Extreme of fear A fear of the sufferings of samsara that leads one to seek liberation for oneself alone. Also known as the "extreme of solitary peace".

Faith A naturally virtuous mind that functions mainly to oppose the perception of faults in its observed object. There are three types of faith: believing faith, admiring faith, and wishing faith. See *Transform Your Life*.

Feeling A mental factor that functions to experience pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral objects. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Form realm The environment of the gods who possess form.

Four noble truths True sufferings, true origins, true cessations, and true paths. According to the Madhyamika-Prasangika school, there are two types of four noble truths: gross and subtle. This is because there are two types of self-grasping of persons, gross self-grasping of persons – grasping at a self-supporting, substantially existent person, and subtle self-grasping of persons – grasping at an inherently existent person. They are called "noble" truths because they are supreme objects of meditation. Through meditation on the subtle four noble truths, we can realize ultimate truth directly and thus become a noble, or Superior, being.

Four opponent powers Four powers that are essential for successful purification: the power of reliance, the power of regret, the power of the opponent force, and the power of promise. See *The Bodhisattva Vow*.

Functioning thing A phenomenon that is produced and disintegrates within a moment. Synonymous with impermanent phenomenon, thing, and product.

God "Deva" in Sanskrit. A being of the god realm, the highest of the six realms of samsara. There are many different types of god. Some are desire realm gods, while others are form or formless realm gods. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Hearer One of two types of Hinayana practitioner. Both Hearers and Solitary Realizers are Hinayanists, but they differ in their motivation, behaviour, merit, and wisdom. In all these respects, Solitary Realizers are superior to Hearers. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Hell realm The lowest of the six realms of samsara. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Hinayana Sanskrit word for "Lesser Vehicle". The Hinayana goal is to attain merely one's own liberation from suffering by completely abandoning delusions.

Humility A virtuous mental factor whose main function is to reduce deluded pride.

Hungry spirit A being of the hungry spirit realm, the second lowest of the six realms of samsara. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Imputation According to the Madhyamika-Prasangika school, all phenomena are merely imputed by conception in dependence upon their basis of imputation. Therefore, they are mere imputation and do not exist from their own side in the least. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Inherent existence An imagined mode of existence whereby phenomena are held to exist from their own side, independent of other phenomena. In reality, all phenomena are empty of inherent existence because they depend upon their parts. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Ishvara A god who abides in the Land of Controlling Emanations, the highest state of existence within the desire realm. Ishvara has limited, contaminated miracle powers that make him more powerful than other beings in the desire realm.

Je Tsongkhapa (AD 1357-1419) An emanation of the Wisdom Buddha Manjushri, whose appearance in fourteenth-century Tibet as a monk, and the holder of the lineage of pure view and pure deeds, was prophesied by Buddha. He spread a very pure Buddhadharma throughout Tibet, showing how to combine the practices of Sutra and Tantra, and how to practise pure Dharma during degenerate times. His tradition later became known as the "Gelug", or "Ganden Tradition". See *Heart Jewel*.

Kadampa A Tibetan word in which "Ka" means "word" and refers to all Buddha's teachings, "dam" refers to Atisha's special Lamrim instructions known as the "stages of the path to enlightenment", and "pa" refers to a follower of Kadampa Buddhism who integrates all the teachings of Buddha that they know into their Lamrim practice. See also *Kadampa Buddhism* and *Kadampa Tradition*.

Kadampa Buddhism A Mahayana Buddhist school founded by the great Indian Buddhist Master Atisha (AD 982-1054). See also *Kadampa* and *Kadampa Tradition*.

Kadampa Tradition The pure tradition of Buddhism established by Atisha. Followers of this tradition up to the time of Je Tsongkhapa are known as "Old Kadampas", and those after the time of Je Tsongkhapa are known as "New Kadampas". See also *Kadampa* and *Kadampa Buddhism*.

Karma Sanskrit word referring to "action". Through the force of intention, we perform actions with our body, speech, and mind, and all of these actions produce effects. The effect of virtuous actions is happiness and the effect of negative actions is suffering. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Lamrim A Tibetan term, literally meaning "stages of the path". A special arrangement of all Buddha's teachings that is easy to understand and put into practice. It reveals all the stages of the path to enlightenment. For a full commentary, see *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Langri Tangpa, Bodhisattva (AD 1054-1123) A great Kadampa Teacher who was famous for his realization of exchanging self with others. He composed *Eight Verses of Training the Mind*. See *Eight Steps to Happiness*.

Liberation "Nirvana" in Sanskrit. Complete freedom from samsara and its cause, the delusions. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Living being Any being who possesses a mind that is contaminated by delusions or their imprints. Both "living being" and "sentient being" are terms used to distinguish beings whose minds are

contaminated by either of these two obstructions from Buddhas, whose minds are completely free from these obstructions.

Lord of Death Although the mara, or demon, of uncontrolled death is not a living being, it is personnified as the Lord of Death, or "Yama". The Lord of Death is depicted in the diagram of the Wheel of Life clutching the wheel between his claws and teeth. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Lower realms The hell realm, hungry spirit realm, and animal realm. See also *Samsara*.

Madhyamika A Sanskrit word, literally meaning "Middle Way". The higher of the two schools of Mahayana tenets. The Madhyamika view was taught by Buddha in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* during the second turning of the Wheel of Dharma and was subsequently elucidated by Nagarjuna and his followers. There are two divisions of this school, Madhyamika-Svatantrika and Madhyamika-Prasangika, of which the latter is Buddha's final view. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Mahayana Sanskrit word for "Great Vehicle", the spiritual path to great enlightenment. The Mahayana goal is to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all living beings by completely abandoning delusions and their imprints.

Maitreya The embodiment of the loving kindness of all the Buddhas. At the time of Buddha Shakyamuni, he manifested as a Bodhisattva disciple. In the future, he will manifest as the fifth founding Buddha.

Manjushri The embodiment of the wisdom of all the Buddhas.

Mantra A Sanskrit word, literally meaning "mind protection". Mantra protects the mind from ordinary appearances and conceptions. There are four types of mantra: mantras that are mind, mantras that are inner wind, mantras that are sound, and mantras that are form. In general, there are three types of mantra recitation: verbal recitation, mental recitation, and vajra recitation. See *Tantric Grounds and Paths*.

Meditation Meditation is a mind that concentrates on a virtuous object, and is a mental action that is the main cause of mental peace. There are two types of meditation – analytical meditation and placement meditation. When we use our imagination, mindfulness, and powers of reasoning to find our object of meditation, this is analytical meditation. When we find our object and hold it single-pointedly, this is placement meditation. There are different types of object. Some, such as impermanence or emptiness, are objects apprehended by the mind. Others, such as love, compassion, and renunciation, are actual states of mind. We engage in analytical meditation until the specific object that we seek appears clearly to our mind or until the particular state of mind that we wish to generate arises. This object or state of mind is our object of placement meditation. See *The Meditation Handbook.*

Mental factor A cognizer that principally apprehends a particular attribute of an object. Each moment of mind comprises a primary mind and various mental factors. See *Understanding the Mind.*

Mental stabilization Generally, the terms "mental stabilization" and "concentration" are interchangeable. More specifically, the term "concentration" is used to refer to the nature of concentration, which is single-pointedness, and the term "mental stabilization" is used to refer to the function of concentration, which is stability.

Merit The good fortune created by virtuous actions. It is the potential power to increase our good qualities and produce happiness.

Method practice Any spiritual path that functions to ripen our Buddha lineage. Training in renunciation, compassion, and bodhichitta are examples of method practices.

Mind That which is clarity and cognizes. Mind is clarity because it always lacks form and because it possesses the actual power to perceive objects. Mind cognizes because its function is to know or perceive objects. See *Clear Light of Bliss* and *Understanding the Mind.*

Mindfulness A mental factor that functions not to forget the object realized by the primary mind. See *Understanding the Mind.*

Miserliness A deluded mental factor that, motivated by desirous attachment, holds onto things tightly and does not want to part with them.

Mount Meru According to Buddhist cosmology, a divine mountain that stands at the centre of the universe.

Nagarjuna A great Indian Buddhist scholar and meditation master who revived the Mahayana in the first century AD by bringing to light the teachings on the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Non-affirming negative phenomenon An object that is realized by means of the explicit elimination of an object of negation. There are two types: affirming negatives and non-affirming negatives. A non-affirming negative is a negative phenomenon that does not imply another affirmative phenomenon. Emptiness is a non-affirming negative because it is realized by a mind that directly negates inherent existence, which is its object of negation, without that mind realizing another affirmative phenomenon. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Non-alertness A deluded mental factor that, being unable to distinguish faults from non-faults, causes us to develop faults.

Non-conscientiousness A deluded mental factor that wishes to engage in non-virtuous actions without restraint.

Non-existent Traditional examples of non-existents are a horn on a rabbit's head and a child of a barren woman. A horn on a rabbit's head, for example, is not established by any valid mind and is consequently a non-existent rather than a conventional (or ultimate) truth. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Object of negation An object explicitly negated by a mind realizing a negative phenomenon. In meditation on emptiness, or lack of inherent existence, it refers to inherent existence. Also known as "negated object".

Obstructions to liberation Obstructions that prevent the attainment of liberation. All delusions, such as ignorance, attachment, and anger, together with their seeds, are obstructions to liberation. Also called "delusion-obstructions".

Obstructions to omniscience The imprints of delusions, which prevent simultaneous and direct realization of all phenomena. Only Buddhas have overcome these obstructions. Also called "obstructions to knowing".

Patience A virtuous determination to forbear harm, suffering, or profound Dharma.

Perfection of Wisdom Sutras Sutras of the second turning of the Wheel of Dharma, in which Buddha revealed his final view of the ultimate nature of all phenomena – emptiness of inherent existence. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Permanent phenomenon Phenomena are either permanent or impermanent. A permanent phenomenon is a phenomenon that does not depend upon causes and that does not disintegrate moment by moment.

Prasangika See *Madhyamika*.

Pretension A deluded mental factor that, motivated by attachment to wealth or reputation, wishes to pretend that we possess qualities that we do not possess.

Pride A deluded mental factor that, through considering and exaggerating one's own good qualities or possessions, feels arrogant.

Primary mind A cognizer that principally apprehends the mere entity of an object. Synonymous with consciousness. There are six primary minds: eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and mental consciousness. Each moment of mind comprises a primary mind and various mental factors. A primary mind and its accompanying mental factors are the same entity but have different functions. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Proponents of things The Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, and Chittamatra Buddhist schools are known as "proponents of things" because they assert that things are truly existent. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Prostration An action of showing respect with body, speech, or mind. See *The Bodhisattva Vow.*

Pure Land A pure environment in which there are no true sufferings. There are many Pure Lands. For example, Tushita is the Pure Land of Buddha Maitreya; Sukhavati is the Pure Land of Buddha Amitabha; and Dakini Land, or Keajra, is the Pure Land of Buddha Vajrayogini and Buddha Heruka. See *Living Meaningfully, Dying Joyfully.*

Purification Generally, any practice that leads to the attainment of a pure body, speech, or mind. More specifically, a practice for purifying negative karma by means of the four opponent powers. See *The Bodhisattva Vow.*

Refuge Actual protection. To go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha means to have faith in these Three Jewels and to rely upon them for protection from all fears and suffering. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune.*

Renunciation The wish to be released from samsara. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune.*

Samantabhadra Sanskrit name for "All Good One", a Bodhisattva renowned for his extensive offerings. See *Great Treasury of Merit.*

Samkhya A non-Buddhist school, the oldest of the Brahmaic schools. See *Ocean of Nectar.*

Samsara This can be understood in two ways – as uninterrupted rebirth without freedom or control, or as the aggregates of a being who has taken such a rebirth. Samsara is characterized by suffering and dissatisfaction. There are six realms of samsara. Listed in ascending order according to the type of karma that causes rebirth in them, they are the realms of the hell beings, hungry spirits, animals, human beings, demi-gods, and gods. The first three are lower realms or unhappy migrations, and the second three are higher realms or happy migrations. Although from the point of view of the karma that causes rebirth there, the god realm is the highest realm in samsara, the human realm is said to be the most

fortunate realm because it provides the best conditions for attaining liberation and enlightenment. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Sangha According to the Vinaya tradition, any community of four or more fully ordained monks or nuns. In general, ordained or lay people who take Bodhisattva vows or Tantric vows can also be said to be Sangha.

Self An I imputed in dependence upon any of the five aggregates. Person, being, self, and I are synonyms. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Self-cherishing A mental attitude that considers oneself to be supremely important and precious.

Self-cognizer A consciousness that experiences itself.

Self-grasping A conceptual mind that holds any phenomenon to be inherently existent. The mind of self-grasping gives rise to all other delusions, such as anger and attachment. It is the root cause of all suffering and dissatisfaction. See *Heart of Wisdom*.

Sense of shame A mental factor that functions to avoid inappropriate actions for reasons that concern oneself. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Six perfections The perfections of giving, moral discipline, patience, effort, mental stabilization, and wisdom. They are called "perfections" because they are motivated by bodhichitta.

Six powers The five sense powers and the mental power. A sense power is an inner power located in the very centre of a sense organ that functions directly to produce a sense awareness. There are five sense powers, one for each type of sense awareness. A mental power is a mind that principally functions directly to produce the uncommon aspect of a mental awareness. See *Understanding the Mind*.

Solitary Realizer A type of Hinayana practitioner. See also *Hearer*. See *Ocean of Nectar*.

Spiritual Guide "Guru" in Sanskrit, "Lama" in Tibetan. A Teacher who guides us along the spiritual path. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* and *Great Treasury of Merit*.

Stupa A symbolic representation of Buddha's mind.

Sugata Another term for a Buddha. It indicates that Buddhas have attained a state of immaculate and indestructible bliss.

Sukhavati Sanskrit word for "Blissful Land" – the Pure Land of Buddha Amitabha.

Superior seeing A special wisdom that sees its object clearly, and that is maintained by tranquil abiding and the special suppleness that is induced by investigation. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Tathagata The Sanskrit word for "A Being Gone Beyond", which is another term for Buddha.

Ten directions The four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, and the directions above and below.

Three higher trainings Training in moral discipline, concentration, and wisdom motivated by renunciation or bodhichitta.

Three Jewels The three objects of refuge: Buddha Jewel, Dharma Jewel, and Sangha Jewel. They are called "Jewels" because they are both rare and precious. See *Joyful Path of Good Fortune*.

Three worlds In the context of this text, "worlds" refers to "realms". The "three worlds" are therefore the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, which are the three levels within samsara. The desire realm is the environment of hell beings, hungry spirits, animals, human beings, demi-gods, and the gods who enjoy the five objects of desire. The form realm is the environment of the gods who possess form. The formless realm is the environment of the gods who do not possess form.

Training the mind "Lojong" in Tibetan. A special lineage of instructions that came from Buddha Shakyamuni through Manjushri and Shantideva to Atisha and the Kadampa Teachers, which emphasizes the generation of bodhichitta through the practices of equalizing and exchanging self with others combined with taking and giving. See *Universal Compassion* and *Eight Steps to Happiness*.

Bibliography

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso is a highly respected meditation master and scholar of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition founded by Je Tsongkhapa. Since arriving in the West in 1977, Geshe Kelsang has worked tirelessly to establish pure Buddhadharma throughout the world. Over this period he has given extensive teachings on the major scriptures of the Mahayana. These teachings are currently being published and provide a comprehensive presentation of the essential Sutra and Tantra practices of Mahayana Buddhism.

Books

The following books by Geshe Kelsang are all published by Tharpa Publications.

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Sadhanas

Geshe Kelsang has also supervised the translation of a collection of essential sadhanas, or prayer booklets.

Assembly of Good Fortune. The tsog offering for Heruka body mandala.

Avalokiteshvara Sadhana. Prayers and requests to the Buddha of Compassion.

The Bodhisattva's Confession of Moral Downfalls. The purification practice of the *Mahayana Sutra of the Three Superior Heaps.*

Condensed Essence of Vajrayana. Condensed Heruka body mandala self-generation sadhana.

Dakini Yoga. Six-session Guru yoga combined with self-generation as Vajrayogini.

Drop of Essential Nectar. A special fasting and purification practice in conjunction with Eleven-faced Avalokiteshvara.

Essence of Good Fortune. Prayers for the six preparatory practices for meditation on the stages of the path to enlightenment.

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Medicine Buddha Sadhana. The method for making requests to the Assembly of Seven Medicine Buddhas.

Meditation and Recitation of Solitary Vajrasattva.

Melodious Drum Victorious in all Directions. The extensive fulfilling and restoring ritual of the Dharma Protector, the great king Dorje Shugdän, in conjunction with Mahakala, Kalarupa, Kalindewi, and other Dharma Protectors.

Offering to the Spiritual Guide (*Lama Chöpa*). A special Guru yoga practice of Je Tsongkhapa's tradition.

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Study Programmes of Kadampa Buddhism

Kadampa Buddhism is a Mahayana Buddhist school founded by the great Indian Buddhist Master Atisha (AD 982-1054). His followers are known as "Kadampas". "Ka" means "word" and refers to Buddha's teachings, and "dam" refers to Atisha's special Lamrim instructions known as "the stages of the path to enlightenment". By integrating their knowledge of all Buddha's teachings into their practice of Lamrim, and by integrating this into their everyday lives, Kadampa Buddhists are encouraged to use Buddha's teachings as practical methods for transforming daily activities into the path to enlightenment. The great Kadampa Teachers are famous not only for being great scholars, but also for being spiritual practitioners of immense purity and sincerity.

The lineage of these teachings, both their oral transmission and blessings, was then passed from Teacher to disciple, spreading throughout much of Asia, and now to many countries throughout the Western world. Buddha's teachings, which are known as "Dharma", are likened to a wheel that moves from country to country in accordance with changing conditions and people's karmic inclinations. The external forms of presenting Buddhism may change as it meets with different cultures and societies, but its essential authenticity is ensured through the continuation of an unbroken lineage of realized practitioners.

Kadampa Buddhism was first introduced into the West in 1977 by the renowned Buddhist Master, Venerable Geshe Kelsang

Gyatso. Since that time, he has worked tirelessly to spread Kadampa Buddhism throughout the world by giving extensive teachings, writing many profound texts on Kadampa Buddhism, and founding the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), which now has over four hundred Kadampa Buddhist Centres worldwide. Each Centre offers study programmes on Buddhist psychology, philosophy, and meditation instruction, as well as retreats for all levels of practitioner. The emphasis is on integrating Buddha's teachings into daily life to solve our human problems and to spread lasting peace and happiness throughout the world.

The Kadampa Buddhism of the NKT is an entirely independent Buddhist tradition and has no political affiliations. It is an association of Buddhist Centres and practitioners that derive their inspiration and guidance from the example of the ancient Kadampa Buddhist Masters and their teachings, as presented by Geshe Kelsang.

There are three reasons why we need to study and practise the teachings of Buddha: to develop our wisdom, to cultivate a good heart, and to maintain a peaceful state of mind. If we do not strive to develop our wisdom, we shall always remain ignorant of ultimate truth – the true nature of reality. Although we wish for happiness, our ignorance leads us to engage in non-virtuous actions, which are the main cause of all our suffering. If we do not cultivate a good heart, our selfish motivation destroys harmony and good relationships with others. We have no peace, and no chance to gain pure happiness. Without inner peace, outer peace is impossible. If we do not maintain a peaceful state of mind, we are not happy even if we have ideal conditions. On the other hand, when our mind is peaceful, we are happy, even if our external conditions are unpleasant. Therefore, the development of these qualities is of utmost importance for our daily happiness.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, or "Geshe-la" as he is affectionately called by his students, has designed three special spiritual programmes for the systematic study and practice of Kadampa Buddhism that are especially suited to the modern world – the General Programme (GP), the Foundation Programme (FP), and the Teacher Training Programme (TTP).

GENERAL PROGRAMME

The General Programme provides a basic introduction to Buddhist view, meditation, and practice that is suitable for beginners. It also includes advanced teachings and practice from both Sutra and Tantra.

FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

The Foundation Programme provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding and experience of Buddhism through a systematic study of five texts:

1 *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* – a commentary to Atisha's Lamrim instructions, the stages of the path to enlightenment.
2 *Universal Compassion* – a commentary to Bodhisattva Chekhawa's *Training the Mind in Seven Points*.
3 *Heart of Wisdom* – a commentary to the *Heart Sutra*.
4 *Meaningful to Behold* – a commentary to Venerable Shantideva's *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.
5 *Understanding the Mind* – a detailed explanation of the mind, based on the works of the Buddhist scholars Dharmakirti and Dignaga.

The benefits of studying and practising these texts are as follows:

(1) *Joyful Path of Good Fortune* – we gain the ability to put all Buddha's teachings of both Sutra and Tantra into practice. We can easily make progress on, and complete, the stages of the path to the supreme happiness of enlightenment. From a practical point of view, Lamrim is the main body of Buddha's teachings, and the other teachings are like its limbs.

(2) *Universal Compassion* – we gain the ability to integrate Buddha's teachings into our daily life and solve all our human problems.

(3) *Heart of Wisdom* – we gain a realization of the ultimate nature of reality. By gaining this realization, we can eliminate the ignorance of self-grasping, which is the root of all our suffering.

(4) *Meaningful to Behold* – we transform our daily activities into the Bodhisattva's way of life, thereby making every moment of our human life meaningful.

(5) *Understanding the Mind* – we understand the relationship between our mind and its external objects. If we understand that objects depend upon the subjective mind, we can change the way objects appear to us by changing our own mind. Gradually, we shall gain the ability to control our mind and in this way solve all our problems.

TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Teacher Training Programme is designed for people who wish to train as authentic Dharma Teachers. In addition to completing the study of twelve texts of Sutra and Tantra, which include the five texts mentioned above, the student is required to observe certain commitments with regard to behaviour and way of life, and to complete a number of meditation retreats.

All Kadampa Buddhist Centres are open to the public. Every year we celebrate Festivals in the USA and Europe, including two in England, where people gather from around the world to receive special teachings and empowerments and to enjoy a spiritual vacation. Please feel free to visit us at any time!

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Buddhism / Poetry

Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

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